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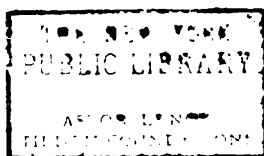
ASTOR LENOX TILDEN FOUNDATION





## **OUT OF THE RUINS**









*French Official Photo.*

**RHEIMS CATHEDRAL**

2  
**OUT OF THE RUINS**

BY  
**GEORGE B. FORD**  
AMERICAN RED CROSS RECONSTRUCTION  
BUREAU IN FRANCE

ILLUSTRATED  
WITH MANY  
PHOTOGRAPHS



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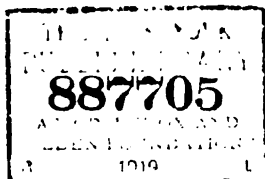
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## PREFACE

In the preparation of this book, as comparatively few printed documents exist in which the facts about devastation and reconstruction are given, I have been obliged to collect most of my data at first hand through interviews with government officials and others who are particularly active in reconstruction work, and by making trips of observation from time to time through the devastated regions. Everywhere I have been met with the greatest courtesy. Busy and overworked public servants of every grade have shown an eagerness to help me secure the needed facts. I cannot express too strongly my appreciation of what they have done to make this book possible, and I wish to take this occasion to thank them for their generous collaboration.



## INTRODUCTION

France has borne the brunt of the war. Over 1,400,000 of her best men have been killed—nearly half of the total lost by all of the Allies exclusive of Russia. From being a creditor nation to the extent of thirty billion francs, she has become a debtor nation for a like amount. Her best industrial and agricultural districts have been held by the enemy. Her foreign loans have yielded nothing; her best internal revenue has been cut off; her factories and mines have almost all worked for the war; she has exported little; the foreign exchange has been constantly rising against her. Over half of all the destruction in the allied countries is in France alone and much the most difficult half at that.

It is only natural that France has come out of the horrible anxiety and strain of the war tired beyond belief; and exhausted as she is she has to meet the overwhelming problem of get-

ting back on her feet as soon as she can. Clemenceau has said that the problem of reconstruction, in its broadest sense, is even more difficult than that of the war.

And yet weary France is attacking this gigantic task with a courage and with a vision that you have but to realize to admire profoundly. She has the will to win the Peace. Give her time and she would come back without special outside help. However, neither France nor the Allies can afford to wait that long, for a slow revival will mean countless economic and social disturbances not only in France but reactively throughout the world. It is not only our moral obligation in the name of humanity to help France now, but it is to our selfish advantage to do so to protect our own prosperity and social order.

Only those who have been in constant contact with the problem in France can begin to appreciate the extent and the hideousness of the devastation Germany has caused in the fair northern land of France. Only those who have gone out of their way to find out can realize the wonderful effort France is making to rise from the ruins. Only careful study

## INTRODUCTION

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will show just how the Allies, in particular America, can help effectively and in a way that will be welcomed by France. It is to try to get at the truth in these matters that this book was written.

GEORGE B. FORD.





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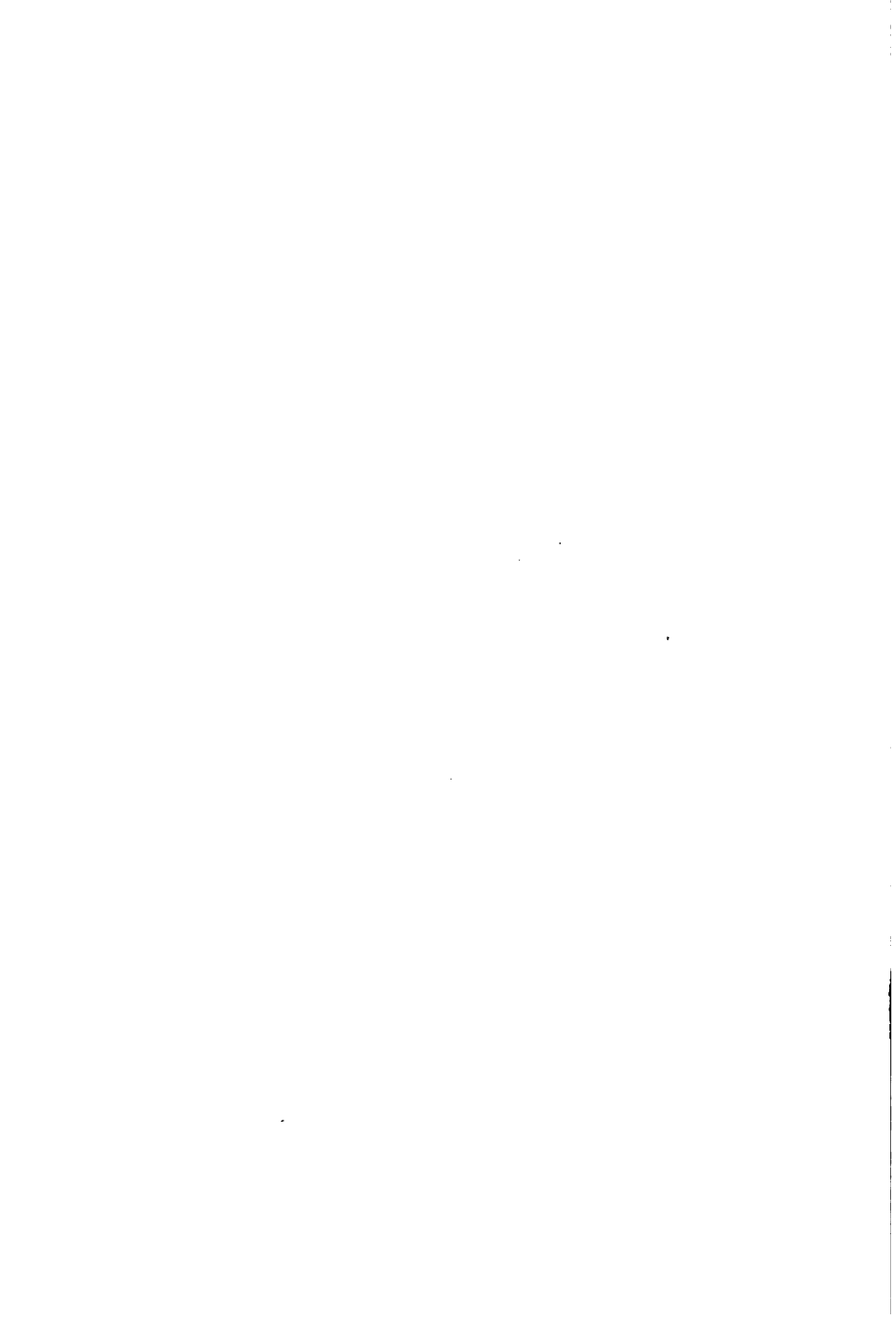
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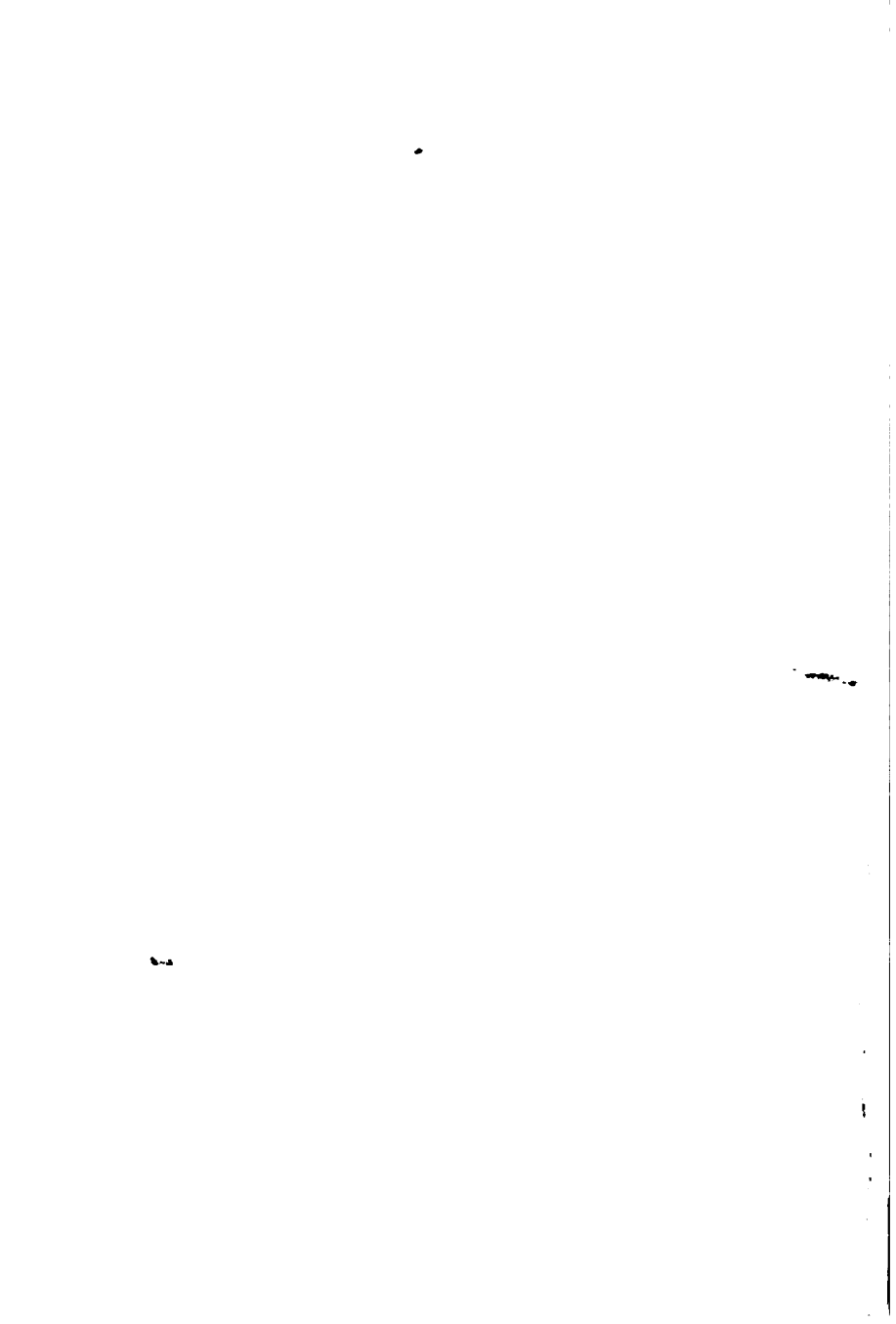
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## **OUT OF THE RUINS**





# OUT OF THE RUINS

## CHAPTER I

### THE EXODUS

In the early summer of 1914 it would have been hard to find a more smiling or a happier land than the region comprising the north of France and Belgium. With its large, substantial, well-stocked barns, its fine herds of cattle, its factories humming night and day, its coal- and iron-mines swarming with workers, it was one of the richest and most prosperous parts of Europe.

Many millions owed their bread to the wheat grown on its fertile acres. The black top-soil is often three, four, and even six feet deep, and so compact that even after months of drought it is moist and firm a few inches below the surface. When those of us who are farmers hear that the poorest of this land raised eighteen and twenty-five bushels to the acre and that the

best raised fifty and sixty bushels to the acre, with an average of about thirty or thirty-two, we appreciate how important a part it must have played in the feeding of France and Belgium.

Aside from the cereals, this country was especially famous for its beet-sugar, for most of the supply of France came from here. All through the country districts one used to find great sugar-mills, each fed by a large surrounding farm area.

And consider its output of coal. Remember that France produced 40,844,000 tons of coal before the war, about 8 per cent. of the world's production. (Belgium produced 22,000,000.) Yet out of these forty million tons, nearly thirty-two million of the best grade came from this northern district.

All the cities and larger towns of the region were noted for their textile factories. When we learn that almost all of the linen manufacture of France, nearly all of its woolen-weaving, and two thirds of its cotton cloth came from the North, we begin to realize what an important part it played in the life of the country.

The thing that used to surprise foreigners traveling through this region was its substantial character. Whether in the brick region of the North or the stone region of the East, even the most simple farm-house or barn was built solidly of good masonry and had the air of being there for all time. Even the workingmen's houses around the mines and the factories were substantially constructed, and while they often left much to be desired in the matter of sanitation, they at least were not flimsy or cheap-looking. There were fine roads everywhere—hard, smooth, level thoroughfares, excellent for the farm truck or for the tourist's automobile. Everywhere there were double-track permanent railways, or, in the country districts, little narrow-gage roads which fed into the main lines. There was a complete network of canals throughout the country and new ones were constantly being built. Transportation was cheap and convenient.

And everywhere there were beautiful works of art. Some of the most wonderful cathedrals and churches of France were in that northern region. It is necessary only to men-

tion the names of the cathedrals of Rheims, Amiens, Noyon, Beauvais, Laon, St. Quentin, and Soissons, to recall some of the most delightful memories of France. The charming town hall and arcaded square at Arras, the old Louis-Thirteenth town hall at Rheims, the famous old fortresses at Coucy-le-Château, Ham, and Verdun, are among the most interesting monuments that have come down to us from the past. These and hundreds of others are all in this part of France.

In August, 1914, the Germans swarmed over this smiling land, driving before them those who could get away, but coming so fast that the majority of its inhabitants did not have time to flee. During August and the first week in September, in 1914, over a million and a half persons, with the few belongings they could take with them, crowded the trains and other conveyances of every sort, or went on foot driving their cattle before them and carrying their possessions on wheelbarrows or in baby-carriages. All mixed up with them were the retreating troops and the wounded coming back from the front, or the fresh troops going

forward to try to stem the invading tide. Every road was choked with people.

The first of the population to be rolled back took refuge in the larger towns like Arras, St. Quentin, and Rheims, only to be driven out again to more distant ones, like Amiens, Compiègne, Château-Thierry, and Châlons-sur-Marne, whence once more they were driven back, into the interior of France. Hundreds of thousands crowded into Paris, then fled into the interior as the Germans came within shell-ing-distance of the city. Even the French Government moved to Bordeaux, and all through France every mode of locomotion was taxed to the utmost. The Ministry of the Interior and a special civilian service of the Ministry of War took charge of the situation, rounded up the refugees as well as they could, and distributed them more or less evenly throughout the interior departments. The refugees who had relatives in the interior of France went directly to live with them; those who had plenty of money available took care of themselves; but nearly a million and a half refugees had to be taken care of by the State

from the very beginning, and this number gradually increased to nearly two million before the end of the war.

The refugees were destitute. In 1918 I saw seventy-five thousand of them pour through Paris in the last days of May and the first days of June, driven back by the German advance at Château-Thierry. They arrived a thousand or fifteen hundred to a train at all hours of day and night, with the stations pitch-black while the air raids were going on: bent old men and women, children in arms, with goats and chickens and baby-carriages and endless bundles—whatever they could manage to save and carry away with them. Most of them had only the clothes they wore. Many of them had ridden a day, or even two days, without food. They wandered about in a daze, quite helpless; most of them peasant farmers who had never in their lives been more than a few miles away from their homes.

From the very beginning the French Parliament voted emergency credits to take care of these refugees. In the autumn of 1914 a law was voted giving an allocation of 1 fr. 25 per day for adults and 0 fr. 50 per day per child.

In addition, special allocations were made for rent, sickness, and other things. Furthermore, each *préfet* of each of the eighty-six departments of France was given an emergency fund with which to feed, clothe, shelter, and to provide furniture, coal, etc., for the refugees.

The Ministry of the Interior Bureau, under Monsieur Ogier and his assistant Monsieur Imbert, distributed the refugees throughout the interior of France in proportion to the original number of inhabitants in a department. At first the allotment was about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the normal population, but as the new advances occurred and as the repatriates came back through Switzerland, it was gradually increased to 3 per cent. or 4 per cent. generally, and in some departments 10, 12, and even 15 per cent. of the population were refugees.

In their first onrush the Germans came so unexpectedly and so fast that most of the civilians in Belgium and over half of those in northern France remained where they were and suffered four and a half years of German occupation. We have heard countless stories of German atrocities, a great many of which ap-



pear to be true. The invaders did carry away everything that they could possibly use, and not only things of industrial, commercial, or art value; they even stripped the homes of furniture, utensils, clothing, etc. They did force a great many people to work for them, often as slaves; they did drive a number of men and women back into Germany; they were constantly punishing or shooting those who stood out against their whims. But one of their most dastardly crimes was their wholesale starving of the children of the North. A thorough medical investigation recently made in Lille, the biggest manufacturing city of the North—with two hundred and eighteen thousand inhabitants before the war—shows that of the children between six and thirteen years of age, of whom over sixteen thousand stayed through the occupation, to-day more than 70 per cent. are either tubercular or so under-developed that their condition is dangerous. Hundreds of children are no larger or heavier than they were five years ago. This is due solely and exclusively to deliberate starvation at the hands of the Germans.

When the Germans were pushed back in the

spring of 1917 in the Somme, the Aisne, and the Oise, several hundred thousand of these civilian prisoners were uncovered and sent back into the interior of France, where they added to the congestion already existing there. To be sure, most of them, as well as many of those who were evacuated in 1914, sought refuge in the departments just west and south of the war zone, that they might rush back to their homes as soon as the Germans were driven out. This meant a special congestion in the cities and larger towns in all of the region just back of the war zone. Some of these cities—with the billeting of troops, the housing of munition workers, and the influx of refugees—had a population over double that which they had before the war and all without any new buildings being erected to accommodate the new-comers. This was especially true in places like Troyes, Dijon, Beauvais, Rouen, and Bourges.

During the latter years of the war, as the Germans began to feel the pinch of starvation themselves, they evacuated large numbers of the French civilian prisoners through Germany and Switzerland and so into France,

During 1918 they sent them back in train-loads—men, women, and children—at the rate of one thousand to two thousand a day. In all, up to the signing of the armistice, nearly five hundred thousand persons had been sent back in this way. The Swiss Government and Swiss charitable societies took wonderful care of them as they were passing through, while expediting their journey across Switzerland as much as possible. The repatriates entered France at Evian-les-Bains, on the border of Lake Geneva. There, the Casino was turned into a great hospitable receiving-station, where the people were given a glowing welcome home and medical attention, money, food, clothing, anything that they had to have immediately. There was also a great system of card-catalogues by means of which the repatriates could get in touch with their relatives or friends in France, and vice versa.

The repatriates spent only a day or two at most at Evian. If they had relatives or friends who would take care of them they were allowed to go directly to them by themselves; but all the rest of the repatriates were sent in blocks of nine hundred first to one department

and then to another, in the interior of France, wherever the local authorities could best absorb and take care of them.

Since the armistice most of the people who were in the invaded regions during the German occupation have stayed on where they were, unless their homes were too badly damaged, in which case they went on into the interior of France. At the same time a great many of the repatriates released from Germany, stopped off at their homes in the liberated regions, but many had to come on into the uninvaded portion of the country because nothing was left for them to live in. The returning military prisoners went directly to their homes, wherever these were in France.

All of these things combined would have meant a considerable increase in the population in the interior of France except for the fact that, since the armistice, many hundred thousands of refugees have returned to the liberated regions. Even so, in the devastated villages not over one third of the original population has yet come back. There are to-day nearly a million and a third refugees and repatriates outside the former war zone,

most of them waiting for a chance to get back.

All along the Ministry of the Interior, working through the *préfets* and *sous-préfets* of the seventy-odd departments outside the war zone, have done everything they could to ease the lot of the refugees. Considering the strain they have been under for nearly five years, the officials and citizens of the thirty-thousand-odd towns throughout the interior of France have been remarkably patient with this influx of "Foreigners," as they call the refugees, for nowhere in France is there a village or a hamlet so small but it has had to billet its quota of these unfortunates.

When a *préfet* of a department received word from the Ministry of the Interior that on such and such a date he would receive a train-load of refugees—that is, about nine hundred or a thousand of them—he would prepare a receiving- and sorting-station, where they could be lodged and fed until they could be distributed throughout the department. Then he would get in touch through the *sous-préfets* with the mayors of the five or six hundred communes within his department and find out how many each could care for, and if the train-load

of refugees could be divided up and one car-load sent here and another sent there directly, the matter would be arranged that way by preference; but if, as was more usually the case, more time was needed in which to prepare permanent lodging for the refugees, they would be held at the central receiving-station often for several weeks before they could be sent on.

The *préfets* and mayors requisitioned many apartment houses and other buildings for the refugees. However, in March and May, 1918, when the great German drives rolled back so many people into the interior, the housing problem became very acute. The Ministry of the Interior was obliged to make emergency arrangements with the Ministry of War for the assignment of four hundred army barracks, each twenty feet wide by a hundred feet long, and nine hundred portable houses, each with two rooms and a shed. The Ministry of War put these barracks up, usually in colonies, wherever the *préfets* of the departments felt they were most needed. The biggest of these colonies were at Quimper, in the Finistère, where the authorities were prepared to lodge

two thousand, five hundred refugees at a time. In these colonies there were usually common kitchens and dining-rooms, work-rooms, recreation-rooms, chapels, hospitals, and dispensaries; in fact, everything necessary to community life.

In addition the *préfets* distributed clothes, special food, money, and anything absolutely needed for the refugees' existence and health. Carrying on this work on so enormous a scale, with only a small amount of help available, the Government could do no more than supply the bare necessities. Wonders were accomplished in the supplying of things essential to existence, but naturally very little could be done to help the refugees really to live in comfort and enjoyment. It was in helping out with these various extras—the things that made the difference between living and merely existing; the things that were needed to keep up the morale—that the several French and foreign charitable societies did so much good work.

Up to the summer of 1917 this work was done by a number of French, British, and American societies; but then, when conditions were becoming more and more acute, and the

morale was getting lower and lower, the American Red Cross came into the field and organized a huge service for the care of the refugees, under Dr. Edward T. Devine and Mr. Homer Folks. They organized a corps of workers in every department of France and, in direct collaboration with the *préfets* and the local authorities, they distributed enormous quantities of food, clothing, utensils, furniture, and tools; they helped to find work for thousands of refugees; they helped the farmers to get agriculture started, and found homes or improved the lodging for some twenty thousand persons.

In scores of the larger centers, where no local committee existed for taking care of the refugees, the American Red Cross organized one and then proceeded to work through that committee. The French authorities have paid an overwhelming tribute to the American Red Cross and other societies for the wonderful helping hand they gave during this emergency, and in particular for the effect their assistance had on the morale of the refugees who were so fast becoming discouraged.

With very few exceptions the farmers who were driven out of the North wanted and still



want to get back as soon as they can. A large proportion of them own more or less property, and their only wish in life is to return to it. Most of the industrial population, even, is trying to get back as soon as it can, despite the fact that many of these people have been making a good living in the interior during the war. Their relatives and friends are in the North, and they still feel like strangers among the people of the West and South of France, where customs and manners and even speech are so different.

There seems to be a very general feeling that almost every one from the undestroyed parts of the liberated regions will return to their homes; and to the destroyed parts of the liberated regions, where some two and a half million people lived before the war, it is estimated that from 80 to 85 per cent. of the original inhabitants will go back.

## CHAPTER II

### DEVASTATION

Those who visited Rheims before the war remember it as a charming city of one hundred and fifteen thousand inhabitants, full of life and activity, centering about its wonderful cathedral.

To-day it is like a buried city of the past. Of its fourteen thousand buildings nine thousand have completely disappeared, except for an occasional gaping party wall. The other five thousand buildings have all been badly damaged and in the case of most of them it is a great question whether or not they can even be repaired. All of the great textile factories which were the life of Rheims are gone—just a mass now of brick and wood and rusty iron.

When the people began to come back after the Germans had been driven away, they found nothing—no water-supply; no electricity; the railroads destroyed, and also the canals; no

sanitary arrangements; nothing but the bleaching bones of the town, and over all the martyred cathedral, perhaps more beautiful than ever in its mutilation, a monument to German barbarity.

The little village of Grécourt in the Somme, the headquarters of the Smith College Relief Unit, had only forty-seven inhabitants before the war; when the Germans were driven out in the spring of 1917 the Allies found no inhabitant left in the town. The invaders had driven into Ham and Nesle those that had stayed through the German occupation, and then had burned and dynamited all the buildings. There were about five hundred acres of cultivable land in the town, which was left in fairly good condition; but by the twentieth of July in 1917 only thirteen inhabitants had returned and they had succeeded in getting about seventy-five acres back into use. Virtually all of their trees had been destroyed except a few along the roadside. All their farm animals had been taken away and all their farming-implements destroyed.

The Germans swept over the region again in the spring of 1918. Hard fighting took

place there as they were being driven out in the summer of the same year. When we saw it again after the armistice not a building was left standing; even the charming little brick church was gone; fields were full of trenches and shell-holes and masses of barbed-wire entanglement, and the débris of battle was scattered everywhere.

Early in the spring of 1919 I stood at a cross-roads in the center of Lens, formerly a bustling mining-city of thirty-two thousand inhabitants. Not a person was in sight; the city was dead; in every direction I could see the horizon, except where it was broken by an occasional twisted mass of rusty iron, all that was left of a factory or of pit-head machinery; not even the party walls were standing. I was told that about one hundred of its people had crawled back and were living as best they could in cellars and improvised lean-tos.

One day in the winter of 1918-19 I walked across from what had been the busy manufacturing city of Chauny to the fascinating medieval hilltop town of Coucy-le-Château. I passed through three or four picturesque stone villages and the deep forest of Coucy. There

was hardly any one in Chauny, for the whole city had been systematically and thoroughly blown up by the Germans before they left. Of the great glass-works of St. Gobain nothing whatever was left. All the afternoon, alone, I walked through this beautiful country. Every field was pitted with shell-holes, or criss-crossed with trenches; every home was a moldering heap of stones; there was hardly a tree that was not more or less shattered; everywhere were the litter and waste of battle. Not a living creature of any sort did I meet; there were even no birds. Not a motor-car or a wagon passed me on the road; around me was utter desolation. It seemed hopeless when one realized that there were 8,400 of these towns destroyed to a greater or less degree, that over 240,000 buildings are destroyed beyond any hope of repair, and that 170,000 more are badly damaged—almost as many buildings as there are in the whole of greater New York.

The devastated area in France and Belgium is almost as large as the entire state of Massachusetts or New Jersey. It covers something more than 7,000 square miles, of which over 600 square miles are in Belgium. That makes

the devastated area in France alone larger than the states of Connecticut and Rhode Island together; while the entire liberated area in France is nearly equal to the combined area of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

The population of the liberated area of France was nearly 5,000,000 before the war; and that of the devastated region in Belgium about 800,000. In France the total population of the 2,000 devastated towns and villages was nearly 2,500,000 before the war; up to July, 1919, not much over a third of the inhabitants of the destroyed towns had been able to come back.

A few months ago I came down over the Passchendaele Ridge, looking for the town of Poelkappelle; all of the country around in every direction was a billowy sea of shell-holes and trenches, the shell-holes often so close together that one could not walk between them. I came to a cross-roads where there was a great British tank half buried in the mud, and to my surprise I discovered that I was in the very center of what had been the town of Poelkappelle. Even the ruins of the houses were so

churned into the soil that the land appeared in no way different from the country round about.

The only living thing as far as the eye could see in that great waste was a lone man digging. He was trying to find the silver he had buried in his garden, but he said he had no idea where to begin his search; he did not know where his garden had been; he could not guess where his house had stood, nor, for that matter, where his street had run.

It was in Rheims that I was standing before a house which had fallen into its cellar, when a poilu came up out of the ruins. I asked him if the home was his, and he said it was. He was just seeing it for the first time since the war; but he smiled and said: "I am much better off than many, because at least I have a sub-cellar left to me."

It is interesting to see how the destruction is distributed through the liberated regions and how it differs in character from one region to another.

The worst havoc is not necessarily where there was the hardest fighting; it is rather in the industrial towns behind the lines, such as

Lens, Chauny, and Tergnier, where the invaders had the time scientifically to blow up every building, that we find the structures completely flattened down. The Mayor of Chauny told me that a few days before the enemy was driven out of the town, some German engineers came to his house and asked to be taken down into the cellar. There they sounded the floor, walls, and ceiling, and made a number of measurements; then they left, never saying a word. Just before the Germans left the town, all the inhabitants were taken to a few houses on its western edge; meanwhile the German engineers placed a carefully calculated charge of dynamite in just the right spot in the cellar of each house and then blew them all up. Hardly a party wall stands to-day. As the Germans withdrew they proceeded to shell the houses in which they had left the inhabitants. In towns destroyed by shell fire, such as Rheims, Verdun, or a village like Vaux, which was wrecked by American artillery, even where the firing was the heaviest, there are usually parts of some party walls standing.

Up to the time the Germans were driven



back in the spring of 1917 there was comparatively little destruction, except right along the firing-line. Also there was a fringe of destruction along the line where the Germans were held and turned back in the Battle of the Marne in September, 1914. This fringe, which was rarely over five or ten miles wide, extended all the way from Meaux along through Sézanne, Vitry-le-François, and Revigny, and included a number of the little farm-villages which, as we shall see later on, have done so much in the way of reconstruction. This line went on through Verdun and St. Mihiel, north of Nancy, and on down to Vitrimont, Gerbéviller, St. Dié, etc., to Thann in Alsace. All of these towns are more or less destroyed; Gerbéviller, in particular, which the Germans took the time systematically to burn.

In a report by the Ministry of the Interior, issued June 16, 1916, we find that in the Marne there were 258 communes damaged, with about 8,500 buildings completely destroyed and nearly 12,000 partly destroyed. There were still 40 communes in the hands of the Germans. In the Meuse, there were still 236 communes within the German lines; and on the French

side of the lines 59 communes were damaged, with 1,800 buildings entirely destroyed and about 700 partially. In the Meurthe-et-Moselle, there were 109 communes damaged, with 1,685 buildings entirely destroyed and 8,245 partially destroyed, and 205 communes still in the hands of the Germans. In the Vosges, we find 53 communes damaged, with a total of 1,256 buildings entirely gone, and nearly 2,000 badly damaged, and 26 communes still in the hands of the Germans. In the Marne, already over 56 per cent. of its communes were badly damaged.

When the Germans were driven back in the Somme, the Aisne, and the Oise, in the spring of 1917, they started their campaign of systematic destruction. In the first part of their retreat, especially in the Oise and the southern part of the Somme, they were moving so rapidly that they could do little more than pillage and burn; but in the latter half of their retreat they had had the time systematically to burn and blow up almost every town. Thus most of the towns east of Bapaume, Péronne, and Ham were completely destroyed. West of this line many buildings were repaired during

1917 with a little tarred paper on the roof and oiled paper in the windows, but east of this line the only thing that could be done was to put up portable barracks.

In a report published by the Ministry of the Interior, on July 24, 1917, we find that the Allied advance in the spring of 1917 freed 499 communes from the enemy, thereby reducing the number of communes remaining in the hands of the Germans, from 2,554 to 2,055. This report covers an investigation made in 1,223 communes in eleven departments, and does not include 450 communes that were still under fire and could not be investigated. The report of June 16, 1916, covered 754 communes; the 1917 report shows 102,697 buildings damaged as compared with a total of 46,263 in the 1916 report. In 1917 fully half of the buildings were completely destroyed. We find, too, that over 527 communes had more than half of their buildings completely destroyed. In 400 communes, over 80 per cent. of the buildings had been damaged. There were 435 town halls destroyed, 600 schools, 472 churches, and 377 other public buildings. The report included 414 factories

of various sorts which had employed at least 105,000 persons.

Then came the big German advances of March and May, 1918, with a new fringe of towns destroyed along the battle line, running through Albert, Montdidier, Noyon, Château-Thierry, and Dormans.

At the same time the enemy caused great destruction behind the Allied lines by long-range shell fire and by aëroplane bombing at Dunkerque, Hazebrouck, Béthune, Arras, Amiens, Compiègne, Epernay, Rheims, Verdun, Toul, Nancy, and Belfort. It was at this time, too, that Paris was shelled by the long-range guns. To be sure, there had been some long-range shelling previously, especially in Belfort, Nancy, Bar-le-Duc, and Dunkerque.

There are hundreds of other towns and villages well behind the Allied lines that have received the visits of German bombing-planes, but despite the considerable damage that was done, fortunately hardly one of the famous buildings of France was seriously damaged.

The greatest destruction of all occurred as the Germans were driven back in the summer of 1918. They evidently felt that all was lost and

that the time had come to harm France economically as much as they could. It was then that they carried out feverishly their long-prepared plans of systematic pillage and destruction: every piece of furniture and clothing, every trinket and work of art, all copper and brass, every machine or every part of a machine, all cattle and farming-implements, anything that could be of any use in Germany, they carried off. Everything that was not carried off, if it could be of economic use to France, they destroyed. It was then that they burned and blew up the factories and flooded the mines. It was then that they scientifically destroyed the industrial towns.

Between July, 1918, and the armistice on November 11, 1918, the Allies won back from Germany nearly 8,050 square miles of land in France, an area almost as large as that of Delaware, Connecticut, and Rhode Island combined; this is about 4 per cent. of the total area of France, including as it does about 2,000 communes with a pre-war population of nearly 3,000,000.

It is interesting to compare this with the German advance in March and May, 1918,

which covered a strip about 140 miles long by a maximum width of about 40 miles, and contained somewhat over 2,300 square miles and about 700 communes.

The Allied advance in March, 1917, covered a front of about 150 miles with a maximum depth of about 25 miles, and included an area of about 1,550 square miles with 500 communes. This area had a total population of about 325,000.

The total area in France invaded by the Germans in August and September, 1914, was over 15,000 square miles; or something over 7 per cent. of the country's entire area. It included over 3,400 communes, with a total population of nearly 5,000,000. This area is larger than that of Maryland and Delaware, together, or that of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut combined.

The actual devastated area of France covers approximately 6,800 square miles or nearly 3 per cent. of the country's area.

In December, 1918, M. Louis Dubois reported to the French Chamber of Deputies that the total war damage in France, not including commercial exploitation losses,

amounted to sixty-four and a half billion francs, of which ten billion francs was the agricultural damage, twenty billion for buildings, five billion for furniture, twenty billion for industry and mining, and nine and a half billion for transportation.

In February, 1919, he made a much more detailed report to the Chamber, putting the total damage in France at 119,801,000,000 francs, of which 85,446,000,000 francs were for buildings, public works, and other fixed structures; 82,352,000,000 francs for furniture, machinery, tools, implements, etc.; 28,751,000,000 francs for raw materials, manufactured materials, and supplies; and 28,242,000,000 francs for revenue or exploitation losses.

Most of the following figures are taken from this later report of Monsieur Dubois and are checked up by recent official investigations of the Ministry of Industrial Reconstitution and the Ministry of Liberated Regions.

Of the buildings wrecked 240,000 are entirely destroyed; 170,000 are more or less repairable. To-day it will cost to replace the former 18,600,000,000 francs; to repair the latter will cost at least 5,000,000,000 francs. To

repair the public buildings and historical monuments will cost 3,900,000,000 francs more, or a total of 22,500,000,000 francs; that is over \$4,000,000,000 only for repairing or reconstructing destroyed buildings. It is estimated that the loss of rent on these buildings alone amounts to over 800,000,000 francs a year.

On December 26, 1918, Monsieur Villemin, the President of the National Federation of Builders, reported to the Office du Bâtiment et des Travaux Publics that clearing up the ruins of the buildings would alone amount to 2,209,000,000 francs. At increased present-day costs this will amount to at least 2,500,000,000 francs, which added to the cost of reconstructing buildings makes the total cost of replacing them at least 25,000,000,000 francs; or over \$4,500,000,000. He also reckoned that to reconstruct all of these buildings in five years would take about 812,000 men per year, without including those engaged in clearing up the ruins or putting the soil into shape for use, or any of those employed on public works.

As has been said, the Germans everywhere carried off any furniture, furnishings, or household utensils that they thought they could



use, and they broke or burned the rest. The insurance companies estimate the damage at about ten billion francs.

In regard to agriculture the ten departments invaded by Germany were among the very richest in France. About three quarters of the land was tillable and most of the rest was good for hay or pasturage. According to a report made in May, 1918, by the Office de Reconstitution Agricole to the Minister of Liberated Regions, these ten departments produced in 1913 over 4,000,000,000 francs' worth of crops. The average yield in this region was about 32 bushels of wheat to the acre, dropping down to 22 and 17 bushels to the acre in the eastern parts of the zone. These departments contained about 15 per cent. of the whole tillable area of France, and the crops amounted to about 20 per cent. of the total. The farming population in this region was about 807,000, which was about 10 per cent. of the effective farming population of France.

The invaded region furnished one fourth of the sugar-beets of France, one tenth of the oats, one tenth of the wheat, one tenth of the

fodder-beets, two thirds of the hops, and over one-fourth of the flax.

In this region there are about 250,000 farms; of these 110,000 contained less than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres apiece; 100,000 contained between  $2\frac{1}{2}$  and 25 acres; about 26,000 between 25 and 100 acres; and there were about 5,500 farms with over 100 acres. Contrary to the usual custom in France many of these farms belong to people working in factories, which fact accounts for the large proportion of small farms. With values as they were in 1918 the capital invested in these farms was about 2,000,000,000 francs, or about 8,000 francs per farm. It can be safely said that the value of these farms has increased  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times since 1918, which would make them worth to-day over 2,500,000,000 francs.

In the invaded departments there were about 5,000,000 acres of tillable land, a little over 1,000,000 acres of pasturage, 50,000 acres of market-gardens, 28,000 acres of vineyards, 125,000 acres of parks and gardens, 200,000 acres of other types of land, and 1,500,000 acres of wood and forest land, or approxi-

mately 6,500,000 acres of cultivable land, and 1,500,000 acres of forest land. That is to say, the cultivable land alone is equal in area to the states of New Jersey and Delaware put together, while the forest land alone is about equal in extent to the entire state of Delaware.

Over 250,000 acres of arable land have been so churned up that they will have to be abandoned or reforested. Before the war these were worth 240,000,000 francs; to-day they are worth at least 360,000,000 francs.

Two million acres more have depreciated at least one half in value, because they are so cut up with trenches and shell-holes. This means a loss of 1,336,000,000 francs. Furthermore, to make this land fit for cultivation will cost 160 francs an acre, or about 324,000,000 francs.

The rest of the land in the war zone—something over 4,000,000 acres of tillable land—represents a cost of 280 francs per acre to bring the land back under cultivation, or 1,214,000,000 francs in all. Thus, the total loss on rural property, exclusive of buildings, is 3,284,000,000 francs.

In the devastated regions about one half of

the farm-buildings have been entirely destroyed; one quarter more are partially destroyed. To-day it would cost to replace these buildings 3,726,000,000 francs, of which 1,800,000,000 francs were included in the appraisal made above for buildings in general.

About 80 per cent. of the farm implements were lost. Before the war it would have cost about 200 francs per acre to replace these implements; to-day it will cost about 600 francs per acre to replace them; or in all 3,186,000,000 francs.

In December, 1918, the Office of Agricultural Reconstitution showed that to replace the losses in the devastated regions they would need 51,000 side-hill plows, 33,000 other plows, 56,000 cultivators, 30,000 mowing-machines, 115,000 farm wagons, 88,000 harrows, 50,000 rollers, 48,000 hoes, 36,000 seed-drills, 13,000 fertilizers, 16,000 beet-extractors, 21,000 winnowing-machines, 18,000 horse-rakes, 32,000 reapers and binders, 53,000 root-cutters, etc.

With regard to animals, in comparing the statistics of 1913 and 1915, we find that whereas in 1913 there were 607,000 horses in the invaded departments, in 1915 there were

only 242,000. On July 16, 1919, the Minister of Liberated Regions reported that in his territory 858,000 horses had been lost, 2,600 mules, 9,000 asses, 841,000 head of cattle, 944,000 sheep, and 424,000 pigs. It is asserted that in all 90 per cent. of the farm animals are lost. The total loss is over 2,090,000,000 francs.

The crops lost would be worth to-day 880 francs per acre, instead of about 400 francs per acre as before the war; this means a loss of 5,839,000,000 francs. It is reckoned that at least 1,300,000 acres of wheat have been lost, and over 850,000 acres of hay.

Furthermore, on the land there has been a loss of revenue of 30 francs per acre over seven years, and on exploitation capital a loss of 34 francs per acre, which means a total for the two of 2,972,000,000 francs.

The 9,000 acres of hunting-land in the region have sustained a direct loss of 20,000,000 francs, and a revenue loss of 17,000,000 francs.

Fishing and fish-preserving cover 28,000 acres of water-courses and 40,000 acres of ponds and lakes. The direct loss is 68,000,000 francs and the revenue loss is 15,000,000 francs.

The water-courses and canals, through lack of care and up-keep, have undergone direct and indirect losses of 66,000,000 francs.

Of the woods and forests which covered about 1,500,000 acres and were worth before the war 800,000,000 francs, about three quarters have been destroyed. It will cost at present prices about 200,000,000 francs to reforest. In addition, the leveling off of 500,000 acres of woodland that has been badly churned up, and its reforestation, will cost 100,000,000 francs. Patching up the forest roads will cost 50,000,000 francs. The timber that was already cut and which has been lost, was worth another 50,000,000 francs. The income loss on these 500,000 acres is about 60,000,000 francs, and during the next fifty years there will be an additional loss of fully 200,000,000 francs. This makes the total loss in forests and lumber equal to 1,400,000,000 francs.

Before the war France used 59,407,000 tons\* of coal a year, and 9,166,000 tons more of coke equivalent. France herself produced 40,844,000 tons of coal and 5,357,000 tons of coke

\* Wherever "tons" are spoken of in this text, the metric ton is meant. It equals 2,204.6 pounds; .984 long tons, or 1.102 short tons.

equivalent. Of this amount 27,389,000 tons came from the Valenciennes basin. In all, the invaded regions furnished over 70 per cent. of the coal mined in France. It was the best quality at that. About 140,000 men were employed in the mines in the invaded regions, out of 203,208 for all of France. To-day if you go to the coal town of Lens, you will find every pit and gallery filled with water, sometimes to a depth of seven hundred feet. Every piece of coal-handling machinery has been dynamited.

It will take 330,000 working-days at a cost of 495,000,000 francs to put the mines back into condition for use; the materials used in this will cost about 500,000,000 francs. The coal-mining buildings which were about 80 per cent. destroyed, will cost 440,000,000 francs to replace. The coal-handling machinery, also about 80 per cent. destroyed, will cost 1,404,000,000 francs to replace to-day. The Germans also stole about 400,000,000 francs' worth of coal in stock. The exploitation loss over ten years amounts to 1,016,000,000 francs. Thus, for coal alone, the total loss amounts to 4,260,000,000 francs.

In 1913 France produced 21,918,000 tons of iron ore, of which the Briey and Longwy basins, in the Meurthe-et-Moselle, furnished 19,629,000 tons, or 90 per cent. of the total. Almost all of this area was in the hands of the Germans. About 150,000 people were dependent on the mines for their livelihood. By comparison, it is interesting to note that the United States furnished at the same time 68,000,000 tons of iron ore, and Germany 35,941,000 tons. Before the war 55 per cent. of the steel manufactured in France came from the invaded regions; that is, about 3,000,000 tons. The same percentage applies to cast-iron.

The mines are not totally wrecked, although two are filled with water and the machinery of others has been destroyed. One third of the ovens can be put back into use very quickly by the replacing of pipes, valves, etc., stolen by the Germans; a second one third have had their blowers stolen; the other one third are utterly ruined.

All of the steel-mills and rolling-mills, with one or two exceptions, are entirely destroyed. It will cost 4,671,000,000 francs to replace



their machinery, and 162,000,000 francs to replace the mining-machinery. Putting the mines themselves back into condition for use will cost 144,000,000 francs; and replacing the mining-buildings and steel-mills will cost 1,281,000,000 francs. The ore stolen was worth 86,000,000 francs, while to replace the material in the mills will cost 1,800,000,000 francs. The exploitation loss over six years amounts to 285,000,000 francs for the mines and 2,752,000,000 francs for the mills. Thus, we can say that the iron-mining industry has suffered a total loss of 627,000,000 francs and the steel- and iron-mills have lost, in all, 10,504,000,000 francs.

The foundries and smaller iron-working shops are also 80 per cent. destroyed and represent a loss of about 736,000,000 francs. The raw and fabricated material represents a loss of another 300,000,000 francs. The building loss is 230,000,000 francs. The exploitation loss over six years is 540,000,000 francs. This means a total of 1,806,000,000 francs.

The mechanical and electrical industry was about 90 per cent. destroyed. To replace the machinery will cost 1,269,000,000 francs; the

raw and manufactured material represents a loss of 1,350,000,000 francs; the building loss is 420,000,000 francs; the exploitation loss over six years is 855,000,000 francs: a total of 3,894,000,000 francs.

Eighty per cent. of the electric power-plants were destroyed, which represents a machinery loss of 360,000,000 francs, with 63,000,000 francs for the buildings and 143,000,000 francs' exploitation loss: a total of 566,000,000 francs.

The chemical industry in the devastated regions also was about 80 per cent. destroyed, which represents a loss of 1,423,000,000 francs for the machinery; 1,600,000,000 francs for materials; 267,000,000 francs for the buildings; and 882,000,000 francs' exploitation loss: a total of 4,172,000,000 francs for the chemical industry.

The glass industry represents a machinery loss of 135,000,000 francs; a material loss of 125,000,000 francs; a building loss of 65,000,000 francs; and an exploitation loss of 82,000,000 francs: a total of 407,000,000 francs.

The mines and quarries produced in 1914, 4,000,000 tons of material. Their machinery

loss represents 36,000,000 francs; their materials, 15,000,000; buildings, 9,000,000; and exploitation loss 19,000,000: a total of 79,000,000 francs.

For comparison it is interesting to turn back to a report made by the Minister of the Interior on October 25, 1916, on building-materials destroyed that would have to be replaced. The report was made for 41,223 buildings at that time totally or partially destroyed. To-day the total building-damage shows almost exactly ten times as many buildings destroyed, and therefore we are multiplying each of the figures given in this report by ten, with the following results: Nearly 40,000,000 cubic yards of masonry have been destroyed; 17,000,000 cubic yards of stone; 55,000,000 bricks; 3,000,000 tons of lime; 2,000,000,000 feet of lumber; 330,000 tons of steel; 910,000,000 roofing-tiles; and 820,000,000 roofing-slates.

The invaded regions were the center of the textile industry of France. In fact, their annual exploitation of 635,000,000 francs' worth of raw material and 1,314,000,000 francs' worth of manufactured products, was nearly a

third of the total exploitation of all sorts in France, which amounted in all to 6,824,000,000 francs.

Almost all of the wool-combing in France (that is, the work of 2,000 machines) was in the devastated regions. Out of 2,365,000 wool-spindles, over 2,000,000 were in the invaded districts. Almost all of the 55,000 linen-looms and of the 550,000 linen-spindles were destroyed or carried away. Of the 712,600 carded-wool spindles in France, only half are left. Of the 7,525,000 cotton-spindles, over 4,000,000 are gone. The 15,000 cotton-looms, 16,700 linen-looms, and 12,000 other looms in the devastated regions are all gone, the Germans having destroyed what they did not take away. Armentières, with its 40 spinning- and weaving-mills, has almost nothing capable of functioning to-day.

The combing-machinery represents a loss of 292,000,000 francs; the buildings, 80,000,000; the raw and finished products 2,460,000,000; the exploitation loss 468,000,000: a total of 8,250,000,000 francs.

To replace the combed-wool spinning-machinery will cost 247,000,000 francs; the

carded-wool spinning-machinery will cost 84,000,000 francs; the cotton spinning-machinery will cost 525,000,000 francs; the linen and jute spinning-machinery will cost 896,000,000 francs. That is, there was a total of 1,252,000,000 francs lost on spinning-machinery.

The loss of raw materials and finished products in wool, cotton, and linen, amounts, at today's prices, to 7,394,000,000 francs. The exploitation loss over six years for the three industries amounts to 1,745,000,000 francs; while the buildings, which are not totally wrecked, represent a loss of only 146,000,000 francs. The largest single item in this list is the loss of raw and manufactured cotton, which amounts to 4,800,000,000 francs. Thus, the total loss to the textile-spinning industry is 18,787,000,000 francs.

The various weaving-loom are from 60 to 90 per cent. destroyed. The wool-loom it will cost 225,000,000 francs to replace; the cotton-loom, 76,000,000 francs; the linen-loom, 108,000,000; and the lace-loom 180,000,000 francs; or a total of 539,000,000 francs.

In the wool industry there was a loss on raw and manufactured products of 2,925,000,000 francs. Adding in similar losses in the other weaving industries, we have a total loss of weaving raw and manufactured products of 4,591,000,000 francs. The building losses in these districts amount to only 88,000,000 francs; while the exploitation losses amount to 728,000,000 francs. Thus, the total loss to the weaving industry is 5,941,000,000 francs.

In the bleaching, dyeing, and ironing plants, which were about 80 per cent. destroyed, there was a loss of 189,000,000 francs on machinery; 140,000,000 on materials; 49,000,000 of buildings; and an exploitation loss of 198,000,000; or a total of 576,000,000 francs.

This makes a total loss for the textile industry in buildings, machinery, raw and manufactured material, and exploitation, of 20,804,000,000 francs. It is only when we go through, one after another, the factory districts of the big industrial towns of the North, and see every factory, almost without exception, cleared bare, gutted, or blown up, and thousands of the employees' homes destroyed

as well, that we can begin to appreciate the horrible calamity that has come over northern France.

Before the war, there were 206 sugar-mills in France, which produced, in 1913, 864,815 tons of sugar. The German invasion left only 61 of these in operation in all of France. These 61 gradually increased their production from 133,000 tons in 1915 to 197,000 tons in 1918. The rest of the mills were 90 per cent. destroyed. The replacing of their machinery will cost 364,000,000 francs; the materials 90,000,000; the buildings 261,000,000; and the exploitation loss over eight years will be 290,000,000: a total of 1,015,000,000 francs for the sugar industry.

The distilleries and other agricultural industries represent a loss of 362,000,000 francs in machinery; 87,000,000 francs in materials; 81,000,000 francs in buildings; and 231,000,000 francs in exploitation; or 761,000,000 francs in all. There were 1,700 breweries in the invaded regions which were about 80 per cent. destroyed. These breweries produced 317,000,000 gallons of beer before the war. To replace their machinery will cost 329,000,000

francs; their materials 75,000,000; their buildings 57,000,000; and their exploitation loss will be 155,000,000: a total loss to the brewing industry of 616,000,000 francs.

The oil industry, which in the devastated region produced 90,000 tons before the war, today represents a machinery, material, building, and exploitation loss of 172,000,000 francs.

The tanning and leather industry, which was active in the region, represents a loss of 152,000,000 francs.

The flour- and other grain-mills represent a loss of 312,000,000 francs.

The paper-mills and printing-plants represent a loss of 700,000,000 francs.

The other secondary industries, such as carpentry, cabinet-shops, hardware plants, etc., mean a loss of many hundred million francs. To replace these minor industries will cost at least 4,000,000,000 francs.

In general it may be said that the mines and manufacturing industries of northern France mean a loss at present-day prices, including raw and manufactured materials, machinery, buildings, and exploitation losses, of over 62,000,000,000 francs.



The railroads have suffered a great deal in the devastated regions, as the Germans took away everything that they could use and made a point of destroying the rest, particularly the bridges and tunnels. Furthermore, 48,500 cars and about 2,000 locomotives fell into the hands of the enemy at the beginning of the war. Three thousand, five hundred miles of track have been destroyed; 2,060 miles of these belonged to the Nord Railway Company, and 1,440 miles belonged to the Est Railway; also, 225 miles of narrow-gage and tramway tracks were destroyed. Besides, 1,510 bridges and viaducts have been destroyed; also 12 tunnels, 590 railway buildings, 150 water-tanks, 2,000 miles of telephone and telegraph lines and 20,000 tons of metal appliances.

To put the road-beds and tracks back into shape for use, including the cost of materials and appliances, will mean the expenditure of 2,426,000,000 francs for the railways, and 416,000,000 francs for the narrow-gage roads and tramways. The extra cost of up-keep until the roads are back on a normal basis amounts to 780,000,000 francs and 52,000,000 francs respectively; the exploitation losses amount to

1,766,000,000 francs and 284,000,000 francs respectively; the bill to the army for its requisition for the railways amounts to 1,314,000,000 francs. This makes a total loss for the railways of 6,266,000,000 francs, and for the narrow-gage and tramway lines of 852,000,000 francs; or 7,118,000,000 francs in all.

Six hundred and seventy miles of canals and canalized rivers have been damaged, including 450 bridges destroyed, of which 300 were iron bridges, 115 locks, and over 200 buildings, to say nothing of a number of syphons, gates, canal-boats, etc. It will cost 216,000,000 francs to repair the damage. There is a loss of 60,000,000 francs on delayed constructions, a 9,000,000 francs' exploitation loss, and a bill of 110,000,000 francs to the army for its requisitions; or a total of 485,000,000 francs, for canals and waterways.

The seaports have suffered damage which it will cost 78,000,000 million francs to repair, and their exploitation loss amounts to 4,000,000 francs.

Sixty-five thousand six hundred miles of roads and highways have been damaged, and 2,050 bridges, viaducts, and tunnels will have

to be replaced. To put these roads back into shape will cost 323,000,000 francs, and the delayed work of up-keep will cost another 665,000,000 francs. Meanwhile the extra cost of up-keep due to military wear and tear represents 240,000,000 francs. This means a total of 1,218,000,000 francs for the roads and highways.

Almost all of the equipment of the postal, telegraph, and telephone systems in the invaded regions is gone. It will cost 295,000,000 francs to replace it. Thus there is a total loss on public works in general of 9,198,000,000 francs.

In general the damage to buildings and other permanent structures, including mines and forests, amounts to 35,446,000,000 francs. Of this 19,000,000,000 francs can be considered for public and private buildings; 1,900,000,000 francs for agricultural buildings; 3,234,000,000 francs for cultivated soil; 1,400,000,000 francs for the forests; 1,434,000,000 for the coal-mines; 1,425,000,000 for the iron-mines; and 1,000,000,000 for other industries; 3,156,000,000 for the railways; 1,218,000,000 for other public works. Household furnishings



*French Official Photo.*

**GERMAN DEFENSES**



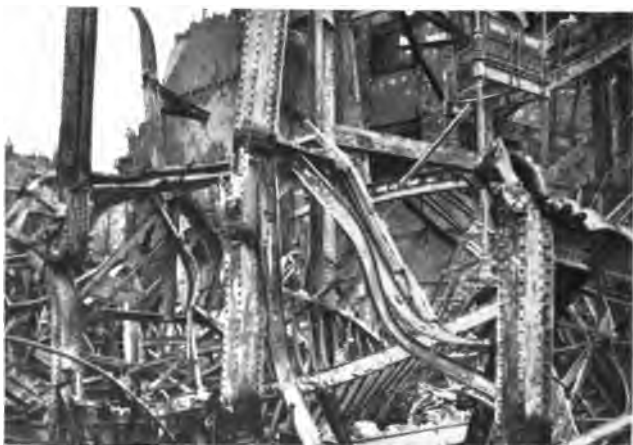
*French Official Photo.*

**TREES WANTONLY CUT DOWN BY THE BOCHES AT BOUZÁ  
AZETTE**



**NIEUPOORT**

To which only ten of its inhabitants had returned by  
April, 1919.



*French Official Photo.*

**A DESTROYED DEPARTMENT STORE AT NANCY**

represent 10,000,000,000; agricultural implements 3,186,000,000; farm animals 2,090,000,000; coal-mining machinery 1,404,000,000; iron-mining and iron-working machinery 4,836,000,000 francs; and that of other industries over 6,000,000,000 francs. The losses in materials amount to over 16,000,000,000 francs for textiles and 5,839,000,000 francs for agricultural products. The total loss in materials amounts to 28,761,000,000 francs. The exploitation losses amount to 23,242,000,000 francs. Thus the total bill which France presents for her war damages is 119,801,000,000 francs.

There is a phase of the appalling damage that no amount of money will ever make good, and that is the sentimental and artistic value of the historical monuments of France. Under the French Ministry of Fine Arts almost all of the buildings or works of art in France that had any historical or esthetic value, have been classed as *monuments historiques* by the State, and the State has seen to it that they have been kept in a good state of preservation. Two hundred and forty of these historical monuments have been seriously damaged by the war;

27 of them have been completely destroyed; 50 have been damaged in the department of the Aisne alone, among them the cathedral at Soissons and the Hôtel-de-Ville at St. Quentin; 6 of these have been entirely destroyed, in particular the marvelous donjon of Coucy-le-Château, probably the best example of medieval civil architecture in France.

In the Marne 49 historical monuments have suffered injury and 58 other buildings noted for their artistic charm have been damaged; 12 of these buildings have been entirely destroyed, among them the medieval wooden houses in Rheims. The greatest and the most irreparable damage is of course that done the cathedral of Rheims, and with it the older church of St. Remy. The charming Louis-Thirteenth town hall at Rheims is completely destroyed. It has been estimated that it would cost over 400,000,000 francs to restore the buildings in these two departments.

In the Meurthe-et-Moselle 23 are damaged, but none totally destroyed. Most of the damage is in and around Nancy, although the famous Place Stanislas and Place Carrière are almost intact. It is estimated that it would

cost over 25,000,000 francs to repair the damage.

In the Meuse there are 20 buildings damaged, but none entirely destroyed. The chief damage is in Verdun, St. Mihiel, and Clermont-en-Argonne.

In the Nord the damage is not so serious, the chief injury being that done to the cathedral at Cambrai.

In the Pas-ve-Calais 57 buildings have been damaged, 10 of which are *monuments historiques*. The famous cathedral at Arras has been badly injured and the still more famous town hall is almost entirely destroyed. It is reckoned that it will cost about 80,000,000 francs to restore the buildings.

In the Somme about 20 *monuments historiques* have been harmed slightly, including the cathedral and two churches at Amiens; and five buildings have been entirely destroyed, including the famous château at Ham.

In the Oise 18 buildings have been injured and four completely destroyed; among the former is the famous cathedral of Noyon, and among the latter are the town hall at Noyon and the charming church at Tracy-le-Val.



In the Ardennes 13 buildings have been damaged and 3 destroyed.

In the Vosges 4 have been damaged, including the cathedral at St. Dié and the town hall at Rambervillers.

In Paris, Notre-Dame was slightly injured by an aëroplane bomb; and St. Gervais, as every one knows, was hit on Good Friday by a shell from the long-range gun.

The total repair bill for historical monuments may amount eventually to 1,300,000,000 francs. In addition it is estimated that there has been over 1,000,000,000 francs of theft and damage in museums and other public collections.

There is another kind of damage that cannot be estimated in terms of money, and that is physical injury. Entirely apart from the 1,400,000 French soldiers who were killed and the more than a million who were maimed, there has been a great loss among the civilian population in the invaded regions, especially those who suffered four and a half years of privations during the German occupation. In Lille, for example, among the 110,000 people who stayed there during that time the general

death-rate, which varied from 19 to 21 per thousand inhabitants, increased in 1918 to 41.55. This remarkable increase was due chiefly to an enormous spread of tuberculosis and organic diseases of the heart, dysentery, and other troubles caused or aggravated by improper nourishment.

Alsace-Lorraine covers 5,604 square miles; that is, it is about the same size as the state of Connecticut. This is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the total area of France. It had 1,874,000 people before the war. During the war the French held about 450 square miles. In Alsace-Lorraine there are over 1,000,000 acres of forests; there were 5,691 textile plants employing over 80,000 people; there were nearly 2,000,000 cotton-spindles. It produced annually 3,539,000 tons of coal; 20,083,000 tons of iron ore; 102,644 tons of potash, the total deposit of the latter being estimated at 2,000,000,000 tons. It made 2,908,000 tons of pig-iron, 1,445,000 tons of steel, and many other articles in lesser quantities.

As there was no very hard fighting in Alsace or Lorraine, most of the mischief done there was caused by air-bombing or committed de-

liberately. The charming old town of Thann is about half destroyed, as are a number of the villages to the north of it. But while the figures are not at hand, the total damage is comparatively small and to France the economic gain of the acquisition of the territory is very great.

Destruction in Belgium is similar and about the same proportionally as that in France. But while Belgium had over 7,500,000 inhabitants before the war, her area is only 11,828 square miles, or a little over 5 per cent. of the area of France. It is estimated that the devastated area in Belgium covers only about 600 square miles, which is less than 10 per cent. of the devastated area of France. Before the war Belgium had nearly 1,500,000 acres of forests; it produced annually 3,253,000 tons of potatoes, 1,703,000 tons of sugar-beets, and great quantities of oats, rye, and wheat; 22,972,000 tons of coal were mined each year by 146,000 miners; 2,301,000 tons of pig-iron were made; 1,492,000 cotton-spindles were in use.

There are about 85,000 damaged buildings in Belgium, of which over half are completely

destroyed. Almost all of these are in the very western part of the country, on each side of a line extending through Nieuport, Dixmude, Ypres, and Menin. But in Louvain, which is at the opposite end of Belgium from the devastated area, there are over 1,500 destroyed buildings, including the famous library.

The total war-damage bill of Belgium, according to the report made in April, 1919, by the Central Industrial Committee, is 85,000,000,000 francs.

The injury to government property, railroads, postal service, telegraph, and telephone systems, public buildings, etc., amounts to 5,535,000,000 francs. The Government's war expenses and the Debt Service amount to 10,118,000,000 francs. The destruction of transportation other than that of the Government amounts to 797,000,000 francs. The taxes levied by the Germans on the provinces amounted to 2,700,000,000 francs. The taxes levied on the communes amounted to 1,860,000,000 francs. The damage to industry by destruction and requisition, and the loss of exploitation during the occupation, amount to 8,028,000,000 francs.

Of this latter sum the German damage and requisitions amount to 5,750,000,000 francs, of which 658,000,000 are for the mines, 335,000,000 for the quarries, 496,000,000 for the copper, brass, and zinc industry, 1,107,000,000 for the iron and steel industry; 1,627,000,000 for the construction of machines, bridges, locomotives, and cars; 154,000,000 for the glass industry; 229,000,000 for the chemical industry; 2,000,000,000 for the textile industry; 174,000,000 for food manufacture; 144,000,000 for the lumber industry; 101,000,000 for building construction; 218,000,000 for the leather industry; 286,000,000 for tramways, water, gas, and electricity; 70,000,000 for the paper industry, etc.

The damage to agriculture is estimated at 1,602,000,000 francs. The damage to proprietors, including the destruction of their buildings and the stealing of their furniture and supplies, is estimated at 3,150,000,000 francs. This makes the actual damage to buildings, machinery, furniture, and supplies, amount to 16,836,000,000 francs.

From the historical and artistic side, the loss in Belgium is not great, except for the destruction of the library at Louvain, and of the



**THE CATHEDRAL AT YPRES**



*A. R. C. Photo.*

**THE OLD TOWN HALL AT RHEIMS**



**THE CLOTH HALL AT YPRES**  
**The Cathedral in the background**

town hall and the cathedral at Ypres. These losses are among the greatest of the war.

The human loss is much more serious. As was brought out in a report to the Belgian Government on March 26, 1919, 6,000 civilians were assassinated by the Germans, leaving over 7,000 orphans. Over 125,000 working-men were deported into Germany, where they underwent the worst kind of mistreatment.

In Italy the official report made in April, 1919, places the total losses caused by the war at between 110,000,000,000 and 185,000,000,000 lira. Of this amount the damage done by bombardment, bombing, and fire amounts to between 10,000,000,000 and 15,000,000,000 lira. The debts contracted abroad and the financial depreciation at home amount to between 45,000,000,000 and 50,000,000,000 lira. The retarding of the natural increase of public wealth amounts to between 35,000,000,000 and 40,000,000,000 lira. The depreciation of private capital amounts to between 15,000,000,000 and 20,000,000,000 lira. The decrease of wealth in the annexed provinces amounts to between 5,000,000,000 and 10,000,000,000 lira.

In Serbia the losses are estimated at about



15,000,000,000 francs. The Germans stole three crops, each worth 1,000,000 francs. They stole or killed over 130,000 horses, over 6,000,000 sheep and goats; 2,000,000 pigs, 1,800,000 head of cattle, and 8,000,000 fowls. They stole or destroyed over 750,000,000 francs' worth of manufactured articles. The damage to buildings and public works is small, amounting to not much over 30,000,000 francs; but the damage to furniture, tools, and utensils amounts to over 400,000,000 francs. The requisition and the taxes levied by the enemy came to more than 800,000,000 francs. There are over 100,000 maimed soldiers in Serbia, and over 150,000 children who have lost both father and mother.

The official Rumanian statement made in April, 1919, places the material loss of Rumania at 10,250,000,000 francs, without counting that suffered by the departments and communes; and at 16,000,000,000 francs the injury to private individuals. Of this amount the damage to industrial buildings amounts to 650,000,000 francs. The damage to other buildings, amounts to 450,000,000 francs. While Rumania was in the war and since the

armistice, over 265,000 people in the country have died from epidemic diseases. Forty-six thousand soldiers died in captivity.

In Poland it is officially stated that the civilian war losses amount to 73,000,000,000 francs, which is fully one fourth of the total for all allied countries. The industries are to a very large extent wrecked and something like one twelfth of all of the buildings in Poland are destroyed.

Germany has systematically tried to ruin her enemies. Almost no destruction has taken place within her own borders; but she frankly boasts that she has tried to put France and Belgium in a position where they could not compete with her in the commerce and industry of the world. The stupendous figures that we have just been presenting show how necessary it is, if we would prevent Germany from making good her boast, to help France and Belgium with their greatly weakened man power and resources get back on their feet again. Once they have had a hand up they can carry on themselves; but unless they have that help, Germany will have won what many consider her first object in bringing on the war.

## CHAPTER III

### THE RETURN

When the Germans were pushed back, at the Battle of the Marne, the refugees poured back in their train. The Germans had advanced and retreated so quickly that except along the battle line of the Marne there was very little destruction. Thus it was easy for the people to return and return they did, not only the refugees from the released land but also a great many who had been pushed out of the region beyond, which the Germans continued to hold for over two and a half years. The result was that the whole liberated region just west and south of the front was congested with refugees, in addition to the fact that every available space was taken by the French, British, or other armies for the billeting of men and horses.

This liberated region was all considered part of the war zone and circulation was difficult. The main roads were always crowded with

troops moving in or out and with immense stores of ammunition and provisions going up to the front. The soldiers were destructive, as armies always are, but on the other hand the army bought farm produce and other things as fast as these could be supplied. The army requisitioned most of the horses and cattle, but they would lend a helping hand with the plowing and in gathering the crops.

German aëroplanes would come over now and then. At first they did not do very much except reconnoiter; but later on, on clear nights, they dropped bombs even in the most unexpected places.

Wherever they could the Germans carried away farming-implements and machines, tools, machinery, utensils, furniture, and stocks of goods, but in general during this first retreat they were forced back so rapidly that they did not have time to do nearly as much damage as they did in their later retreats.

Despite the difficulty of transporting fertilizer, seed, and tools, farming prospered in the early liberated regions, especially where soldiers could be had to help out with the work, to take the place of the men who had been mo-

bilized. This rich agricultural land—the seven to eight thousand square miles that were liberated in the first retreat—continued at nearly its former productive value.

In the towns people had a harder time of it. The shops had plenty of customers, but they had great difficulty in getting their supplies, for all of the railways were at the service of the army, and civilians could get only the small amount of space the army might let them have.

Nearer the firing-line, within range of the German guns, conditions were much more difficult. In general the French Army tried to keep a space some four or five miles deep behind the lines to which no civilians were allowed to return lest they be in the way of army operations. As a matter of fact, however, the refugees would go back to their homes and to their daily life, even almost up to the firing-line itself. A story is told of a French officer in charge of one of the sectors at Rheims, who was much worried about the French peasant farmers that persisted in working where they were in full view of the enemy, who every now and then would shell them. He expostulated with the

peasants and tried to persuade them to stop, but they stubbornly insisted that they always had worked there and saw no reason why they should not continue. Finally he found that the only way he could protect them was to send out his military police and arrest them. They were typical of the French peasant farmer, who can't see why a passing thing like fighting should stop the work that he has been doing for a thousand years. All through history people have been fighting over this same land, and all through history the French peasant has kept doggedly at his work.

If a shell fell in his field the farmer would go to work and fill up the hole. If a trench or barbed wire ran across his field he would plow around it. If a shell or a bomb broke his windows he would cover them with oiled paper or canvas, if he could get it; if his roof or part of his wall was damaged he would try to get some tarred paper or tin with which to repair it. If the Germans had injured his farming-instruments he would do his best to repair them, or he would make shift with what he could find, although of course wherever he could he would go to the government repair shops to have his

implements and machines mended up or to buy new ones. For such food as he could not supply himself he would drive or walk to the nearest town.

They did manage to exist, these refugees, but there was much suffering among them, both in the country districts and in the towns. It was to alleviate this distress that the French Government and various French and foreign societies started relief work throughout the liberated regions, although it was not until the spring of 1917 that the work was done on any large scale.

With the Battle of the Somme in the spring of 1917 the Germans were driven back as much as twenty-five miles in some places over a frontage of about one hundred and fifty miles. This released about one thousand, five hundred and fifty square miles of land, all the way from Lens on the north to Rheims on the south. There are over six hundred communes in this area and there was hardly one among them that was left intact. We did find, however, a few of the larger towns, like Noyon, Guiscard, Ham, and others, that had suffered comparatively little, except along the railways. This

was because the Germans before retreating concentrated the French civilian population in these centers so that they could destroy the rest of the area systematically. This meant that almost all of the farming villages were demolished, and all along the former front, which the Germans had held for two and a half years, the destruction was complete.

This was the first real desolation on the vast scale that we know so well to-day, where one can travel for miles and see nothing whole—gaping walls with perhaps a formidable German concrete gun-turret built right across what used to be a home; shell-holes so close together that the British officer was quite justified when he complained that the boches had not even left him the width of a single-file path for his mule train; unbelievable acres of rusting barbed-wire entanglements; ghostly gnawed-off forests standing ashamed; every cross-road a vast crater, and everywhere the wreckage of war, as though a battle had been fought here only yesterday.

Nevertheless, as soon as the Germans were driven out of the region the French peasants came trooping back from where they had been



waiting all of this time, just west of the front, or from the interior of France. The French Army did not want them there because they were in the way and because they must be fed. The French Ministry of the Interior ordered the *préfets* throughout France to let only those return who could look out for themselves and who could be economically independent; but, despite the destruction and the menace of the Germans, anywhere from 10 to 25 per cent. of the original population returned into this region. It was a strange experience, which I often had here in the summer of 1917, to go through village after village that at first sight appeared to be completely deserted—where trenches ran through what was left of homes and where the farm-yards were a network of barbed wire—and see an old peasant woman emerge from a cellar, or an old man come out of a flimsy lean-to, and to find here and there chickens, rabbits, goats, and now and then a cow or a horse. It was a miserable existence at best; these people were real pioneers. One would see them picking in their ruins, and would wonder what they could salvage.

The one bright spot for them was the army dump. No village fair nor city department store ever held out such tempting possibilities. To be sure, they were not supposed to take anything deposited here, but where one starts housekeeping with nothing at all, a rusty little camp stove or a broken-down iron bed or a sheet of corrugated iron is a Godsend, and somehow everything that human ingenuity could use melted away from the dumps, to reappear as the pride of the home of some Robinson Crusoe.

It was in the little village of Pimprez, between Compiègne and Noyon, that I was in a ruined stone house when the owner and her daughter returned to see it for the first time since the Germans were pushed back. For two and a half years these two had had to live in a dark, damp cellar under the house, sleeping on straw, and forced to take care of a group of German officers who lived over their heads. They exultingly told how once a French shell had hit the house and killed most of the German occupants. They went with dry eyes all over the ruins of their home and of their charming garden (for the Germans had

maliciously cut down every tree and bush in it, even uprooted the flowers); they did not really break down until they looked in the place where they had hidden their ancestral linen only to find that the Germans had rifled it.

Most of those that stayed through the German occupation preserve a bitter hatred of the boches and everything pertaining to them. The majority of the peasants feel about them as did an old woman in one of the little villages back of St. Mihiel. An American soldier told me that when the American Army took the St. Mihiel salient, in the summer of 1918, he arrived in a little village just after the Germans had left. The place seemed quite deserted, but as he and his companions pushed open the door of a little house they found an old woman huddled up over a small fire. In his picturesque French he told her that the boches had gone and that the Americans had come to free her. She paid no attention and did not seem to understand. He illustrated what he had said as graphically as he could; and finally, without saying a word or even looking at her visitors, she got up, walked

across the room, opened the door of a cupboard, and swept all the china off one shelf after another, upon the tiled floor. The Americans naturally thought she was crazy, but they looked at the china bits and found on each article an imperial German double eagle. Her loathing for the German officers, for whom she had kept a *popote* for four years, could hardly have been more emphatically expressed.

These pioneers who returned to the desert needed much help. The French Army, which extended a little to the north of the river Somme, organized an important service for supplying the urgent needs of the returning civilians. Meanwhile the Ministry of the Interior, working through the *préfets*, the *sous-préfets*, and the mayors, did what it could to help the people get started again. As far as possible they supplied food, clothing, tools, utensils, furniture, bedding, and materials for repairs, and even help in the plowing of the fields. They also secured some farm animals for the peasants. The Government put up nearly three thousand portable wooden houses, besides repairing several thousand more.

North of the Somme, in the British Army

zone, very few of the inhabitants returned, partly because the land was so churned up by shell fire and the buildings so wrecked that to live there was almost out of the question, and partly because the British forces needed all of the available space for their military preparations and provisioning. The British Army plowed about twenty-five thousand acres of land in the district, on which they raised crops chiefly for their own use. The French Government did not encourage the refugees to return to this region.

Meanwhile, to the south of the Somme various private relief societies came in, each taking a number of towns to itself in which it had exclusive charge of helping the returning refugees. Most of the clothing and furniture that they have been distributing comes from the Government. These societies, several of which were British or American, worked under the Ministry of the Interior and later under that of Liberated Regions, supplementing the relief work which the French Government was doing. Their services were of the greatest value, and there is no doubt that there would have been vastly more suffering than there

was if it had not been for the devotion of the French, British, and Americans who lived in these regions until the next German offensive, sharing the rough quarters of the refugees themselves. Three of these societies did a great deal of repairing, which was deeply appreciated by the refugees.

During the winter of 1917-18 it was very cold and wet, and many of the refugees grew discouraged and went back into the interior of France. Those who persevered were just getting well started in their spring plowing when the great German offensive of the end of March, 1918, drove them out again. This time the French Government tried to evacuate everybody. Nearly twelve hundred square miles of land were again overrun by the Germans on a frontage of about eighty miles and to a maximum depth of about thirty-seven miles. Many of the people moved into the districts just to the south, around Soissons and Château-Thierry, only to be driven out of that region again by the onrush of the enemy in the end of May, 1918. This time the invaders advanced a maximum of about twenty-five miles and took about eleven hundred square miles of

territory. Again every road was crowded with the farmers driving their live-stock before them, pushing baby-carriages, wheelbarrows, anything in which they could take away their more precious belongings. Some made their way almost across France before they found a resting-place. Nearly seventy-five thousand poured through Paris by train in the last days of May and the first days of June, 1918.

All during the summer of 1918 they waited impatiently for their chance to return, and as fast as the Germans were driven back in August and the early autumn the refugees flocked in after them. The restrictions of the Government were severe at first because it was not prepared to take care of very many at a time, but as its services of transportation and provisioning improved the door was opened more and more, until in the spring of 1919 all restrictions were removed and anybody that wanted to go back could.

Thousands of families went back on forty-eight-hour passes; a few stayed over in the ruins of their homes, but most decided to give it up for the time being and returned to their temporary abiding-place in the interior until

such time as the Government would be able to take care of them in their wrecked towns.

In the early spring of 1919 many went back to plow and to start cleaning up their places, and as the weather became warmer people arrived in large numbers with the expectation of staying through the summer at least, and with the hope that they would be well enough installed by autumn to carry on through the following winter. Up to the first of July, 1919, Rheims, which was almost demolished, had got back nearly 85,000 of the 115,000 inhabitants it had before the war. To Lens, entirely destroyed, 2,500 of its population of 82,000 had returned; to Chauny, also destroyed, 500 of its 18,000; to Ham, half-destroyed, had come 1,000 of its 8,000 people. There are many of the smaller demolished villages to which virtually nobody has returned even yet, but it is reckoned that among the three-thousand-odd damaged villages about 85 per cent. of the former population has come back so far. This is in addition to the workmen and the soldiers quartered in the towns.

French, British, and American relief societies have been very active since the armistice,



particularly since the first of the year, when refugees began to come back in numbers. A number of local committees have been formed to take care of regions that could not be so well looked after by the general relief societies. The Ministry of Liberated Regions has tried to divide up the field geographically among these different societies and committees, so that each will have without any overlapping a definite district for itself, for which it will be solely responsible. These relief societies are still giving, or rather selling, a considerable amount of clothing, furniture, utensils, etc. (chiefly furnished by the Ministry of Liberated Regions), but more and more they are trying to help local commerce get on its feet, with the expectation that they will be able to withdraw most of their relief work soon, allowing normal economic conditions to take their course. Lately these relief organizations have been actively helping the Government in its great program of creating reconstruction coöperative societies and agricultural syndicates; in establishing public-health services, dispensaries, and hospitals; and in creating centers of community life and recreation.

The Ministry of Liberated Regions has set up several thousand portable houses and many hundred large barracks. It is making emergency repairs on hundreds of other houses and in this work some of the relief societies are helping actively. The French Government has several hundred thousand men at work cleaning up the fields and plowing them. Arrangements are being made for clearing away the ruins of the villages. The return is well under way. By the spring of 1920 life should have begun to be reëstablished on every hand.

## CHAPTER IV

### PUBLIC RELIEF

From the very beginning of the war, in August, 1914, the *préfets* of the ten departments that were wholly or partly overrun by the Germans were instructed by the Government in Paris to give every help they could to the refugees. Each *préfet* distributed relief, working through the *sous-préfets*, the mayors, and through local committees wherever they could be formed. Car-loads and truck-loads of food and clothing were sent down from Paris and elsewhere.

On December 26, 1914, the French parliament opened a credit with the Ministry of the Interior of 800,000,000 francs to meet the most urgent needs of the civilians in the war zone. Upon the creation of the Ministry of Liberated Regions, in November, 1917, the credit was turned over to the head of this department, and on August 5, 1918, he reported to the parlia-

ment that 140,000,000 francs of this sum had already been expended—15,000,000 francs in the Marne; 10,000,000 francs in the Somme; from 5,000,000 to 8,000,000 francs each in the Oise, the Meurthe-et-Moselle, the Aisne, and the Meuse; and 2,500,000 francs each in the Nord, the Vosges, and the Seine-et-Marne. On May 18, 1919, the Ministry of Liberated Regions reported to the parliament that about 125,000,000 francs out of this credit had been advanced to the inhabitants of the liberated regions up to April 1, 1919, in the form of advances against their eventual war indemnity; that is to say, 20,000,000 francs directly against their eventual damages, 10,000,000 francs for urgent repairs, 15,000,000 francs for furniture, 5,000,000 francs to small shopkeepers, 18,000,000 francs to manufacturers, and 69,000,000 francs to farmers. This means only money given, and does not include any supplies.

Meanwhile, from early in the war there existed an interparliamentary committee which consisted of all of the Senators and Deputies from the invaded departments. This committee considered the problems which affected their constituents. There was also an inter-

ministerial committee which consisted of representatives from all of the different ministries that were interested in the problems of the war zone. First the Ministry of the Interior, and later the Ministry of Liberated Regions worked in close contact and harmony with these two committees.

In a decree of July 9, 1917, the Minister of the Interior arranged for the payment of 1 fr. 25 a day to each head of a refugee family or adult, and 0 fr. 75 per day for each child under sixteen years of age. These are the same amounts that wives and children of mobilized soldiers were getting; however, in the case of refugees it was limited to three months, with the privilege of renewal if needed, provided the mayor, the *préfet*, and the committee in charge agreed. The decree arranged for the distribution of food to especially needy families; it also tried to find work for the refugees.

In a circular issued by the Minister of Liberated Regions in January, 1919, it was stated that refugees were to continue to receive this daily stipend, which had since been increased to 1 fr. 75 for adults and 1 fr. 4 for children under

sixteen, until a general authorization was given allowing them to return to their native towns, with three months of grace after that date. Furthermore, every refugee was to be given twenty francs to help him get started immediately upon his arrival in his native town.

Early in 1918 there was put in charge of relief work, in each of the liberated departments, a secretary-general who was directly responsible to the Ministry of Liberated Regions for all relief and reconstruction work in his department. Relief outposts were set up wherever needed in the department. These relief stations sold, at a small price, clothes, linen, shoes, utensils, tools, etc. They were given priority in the transportation of their supplies. Each post took care of a number of communes and in each commune the station would rely on the mayor, the school-teacher, the curé, and others, to keep it informed about the needy people in their communities.

The *préfet* and the secretary-general worked in close coöperation with any private relief societies that were in the neighborhood, and always made a point of rounding out the work of these societies.

In October, 1916, I had the privilege of inspecting the relief work in the Department of the Meurthe-et-Moselle, with the *préfet*, Monsieur Mirman, who has since left, to administer the recovered province of Lorraine. His work was a striking example of how wholesale relief work can be made human, for despite the fact that he was taking care of thousands, almost hundreds of thousands of refugees, he seemed to have a personal contact with them all and the children all knew him and flocked to him as their godfather.

I asked him how he handled the relief problem and where his money came from, and he said he went ahead and did everything that he felt necessary for his people, and then at the end of each month he sent in an account to the Government at Paris; usually there was no question, but if there was he would go up to Paris and fight it through, because he insisted on being allowed to use his own judgment as to what was needed and when it was needed.

He showed us many buildings around Nancy that had recently been destroyed by nineteen-inch shells coming from about eighteen miles away. He showed us especially a



*French Official Photo.*

**A TYPICAL GOVERNMENT PORTABLE TOWN HALL AND SCHOOL**



*A. R. C. Photo.*

**A TYPICAL GOVERNMENT PORTABLE HUT**





*A. R. C. Photo.*

**THE INTERIOR OF A PORTABLE HUT FOR REFUGEES**



*A. R. C. Photo.*

**THE INTERIOR OF A TYPICAL WOODEN HUT**

school building which a few weeks before had been hit by a shell while school was in session. Fortunately, when the first shot was fired that morning the teacher took all of the children down into the basement of the school, and when the second shot demolished the building over their heads not one of the children was harmed.

During constant bombardments Nancy was full of refugees from Pont-à-Mousson and the villages to the north where the fighting was going on. Despite the danger most of the refugees preferred to stay here rather than to be sent off to the interior of France; they had a feeling that any day they might be able to get back to their homes. The result was that there was a most serious relief problem in Nancy. We visited the big military barracks on the edge of the town, where Préfet Mirman showed us twenty-five hundred refugees, men, women, and children. All had beds, mattresses, and plenty of blankets; each family had a place which they had partitioned off for themselves; there was a big common kitchen and dining-room where nourishing meals were prepared and served; there were work-rooms for the men and women; there were schools in which the

girls learned housekeeping, sewing, and cooking, and schools in which the boys learned carpentry and various things connected with farming; and there was—what Préfet Mirman was proudest of—a theater! He said that he had had much trouble in enforcing discipline at first: at least eight guards were necessary just to keep the children out of mischief; but when he put in the theater, with cinema shows, amateur theatricals, concerts, and other attractions he found that he could reduce his guards from eight to two. But the charming thing about my visit was to see the way every one greeted the *préfet* with a smile. All the children would run up to him and he had a cheery word for every one; he inquired after each one's health and told each just what to do to take care of himself. There was one child who had been behaving very badly and sternly but tactfully the *préfet* told him just why he must do better, appealing to his good nature. With every one he was very kind, very gentle, very patient; but at the same time he made all of them realize that they must play the game too. In the autumn of 1916 he was taking care of all of these people, and paying all overhead ex-

penses, for 1 fr. .05 per person a day; to-day the same thing would cost about double.

In the summer of 1919 we find this work continuing, the Government encouraging private relief societies to work wherever they can and dividing up the field among them. More and more the Government is creating local committees that will be responsible for their respective districts. It is encouraging normal business; it is helping the local shopkeepers, building-trade and professional people to begin life anew in their own towns; but wherever there is real suffering that nobody else is trying to relieve, the Government steps in and takes up the task.

In recognition of the immediate need for the resumption of a normal economic existence a special service was organized on December 18, 1918, in the Ministry of Liberated Regions, called the Service des Travaux de Première Urgence. It is the duty of this service:

(1) To plow and to sow all land that is immediately available.

(2) To remove unexploded munitions from the soil; to fill in the trenches and the shell-

holes; and in general to put the soil back into condition for cultivation.

(3) To make temporary repairs to any houses that can easily be made habitable, and to put up all sorts of temporary shelters for the returning refugees.

(4) To erect barracks for the housing of labor at work in the devastated regions.

(5) To put back the narrow-gage railways throughout the devastated regions.

In addition to the central organization in Paris, there is a branch organization in each department, which has its own personnel, transportation, and stock of material. On June 15, 1919, the work was divided into twenty sectors, with a total of 827 officers in charge and 5,197 office workers and foremen. The labor included 82,640 French civilians, 8,122 French soldiers, 17,199 Russians and colonials, and 179,906 German and other prisoners: a total of nearly 300,000 people doing emergency work in the devastated regions. The pay-roll, transportation, and supplies were costing the Government about 200,000,000 francs a month. This army, however, was getting splendid re-

sults. By the fifteenth of June nearly 5,000,000 acres of land had been put back into condition for cultivation; over 80,000,000 square yards of barbed-wire entanglement had been cleared up; about 83,000,000 cubic yards of trenches and shell-holes had been filled; nearly 75,000 houses had received enough temporary repairs to make them habitable; and in addition nearly 5,000 portable houses had been erected.

One of the most serious problems of all is water-supply. During the war the engineering corps of the various armies put in a sanitary water-supply in each camp center. This water-supply was usually left in good condition when the army withdrew; in fact, a number of new ones were established, but these by no means sufficed. Ever since the army left, the sanitary service of the Ministry of Liberated Regions has been studying this situation and through the Service des Travaux de Première Urgence has cleaned out and rendered safe a number of wells. Meanwhile, on May 21, 1919, the Director of the Bureau of Rural Engineering issued a statement about water-supply showing under just what conditions it

was or was not safe to drink the water found in wells, ponds, or brooks in the devastated regions. The statement is based on a general order issued by the French Army Headquarters Sanitary Service on October 27, 1914.

As the question of sewage-disposal also has become most urgent in the devastated regions, especially in cities and larger towns, the sanitary service of the Ministry of Liberated Regions and the Service des Travaux de Première Urgence have had to devote much attention to disinfecting the ruins and to cleaning out and patching up the vaults and the sewers. It is a particularly difficult problem at Rheims, where there are now over thirty thousand people living in the ruins.

One of the worst problems of all is that of the mosquitos. Every shell-hole, every trench, is a breeding-place for these insects, even the deadly malaria mosquito. The condition is an extremely hard one to remedy on account of the extent of the problem, but the trenches and shell-holes are rapidly being filled in and in other breeding-places kerosene is being put to destroy the pest.

A great deal of medical work is necessary

to take care of the urgent cases—either those persons who have fallen sick suddenly, or those who have been wounded by exploding munitions. And so the Ministry of Liberated Regions has been trying to organize a dispensary and a hospital in each of the larger centers, and is encouraging in every way possible the provision of traveling dispensaries to serve the devastated towns. Physicians demobilized from the army are encouraged to go at once to the devastated regions to help out there. Meanwhile the various relief societies have sent many doctors and nurses there.

When a refugee gets back into the devastated regions and finds that he needs help of some sort, he goes to the mayor of his commune; or if the mayor is not yet back, he goes to the *sous-préfet* or even to the *préfet*, and makes his requests. The *préfet*, in collaboration with the secretary-general of the department, takes the case up with the proper service of the Ministry of Liberated Regions, and any matter of immediate relief that is recommended by the *préfet* is taken care of as soon as possible by the various services of the Ministry of Liberated Regions, at no cost to the



applicant. Very often, where the Government cannot at once give the help needed, a local society, or one of the large general relief societies, comes to the rescue. There always seems to be a good understanding between the Government and the private relief groups.

In July, 1919, I found that at the great relief warehouses of the Ministry of Liberated Regions at Rheims over four thousand new refugees were being fitted out every month. The enormous stock of furniture, bedding, stoves, cloths, food, implements, etc., was turned over every two weeks. The refugees bought at lowest wholesale cost whatever they needed, but they paid no cash, as the value was simply deducted from their eventual indemnity. Every applicant was carefully investigated and followed up.

It remains only to be seen how the State takes care of the demobilized soldiers in the devastated regions. In the first place, the government allowances for the soldier's family continue for six months after demobilization, but in decreasing amounts during the period; on the other hand, if the demobilized man cannot get work he is entitled, as head of



**A HOME-MADE HOME AT ESMERY HALLON, SOMME**



**THE ONLY TWO HOMES IN NIEUPOORT IN APRIL, 1919**

American Red Cross  
Department of General Relief  
Warehouse Districts  
Dec. 20th, 1918



the household, to an out-of-work allowance of 2 fr. 25 a day, with 1 fr. a day for his wife, 1 fr. for each child over sixteen years of age out of work, and 0 fr. 75 for his father or his mother out of work.

If a demobilized man owned any property he was excused from the payment of interest and taxes during the war and for six months after. If he rents property, he gets special rates or a complete exemption from rent. All leases are automatically extended, where desired, for a period equal to the length of the war. If a demobilized man is a landlord and his tenants cannot pay, he can himself secure an indemnity from the State.

Moreover, the State conducts an employment bureau for demobilized men, and gives in cash to each demobilized man 250 francs; in addition to this he receives from 15 to 20 francs for each month of service; and 52 francs more is allowed for clothes.

Maimed soldiers are well taken care of by a special bureau of the Government. The Government has organized re-education schools all over France that are re-educating thirty thousand maimed soldiers at a time. In

addition there are private schools, most of them in Paris, that are taking care of about three thousand more. These schools fit a man to earn an independent economic livelihood according to what he was best fitted for before the war. Attendance on them is optional, but there is a waiting-list in most of them. Maimed soldiers returning to the devastated regions can learn free of charge in these schools a useful occupation in agriculture or trade, which will make him a helpful economic factor in the reconstitution of the region.

## CHAPTER V

### PRIVATE RELIEF

From the first days of the war there has been a great outpouring of sympathy for the victims, and every one has been more than willing to turn to and help to the best of his ability. Individuals and societies representing all of the allies and most of the neutrals have given freely of their money and personal help.

From the very beginning the three societies of the French Red Cross and various other French groups have been working with the refugees who were driven back by the German advance. But it was not until the spring of 1917, when the Germans were driven back in the Somme, the Aisne, and the Oise, uncovering the hundreds of towns and villages which they had wilfully destroyed, that the real pioneer relief work began. Previous to that time, perhaps the biggest work done by any one society was the achievement of the English So-

ciety of Friends in the Meuse and the Marne, especially east of Vitry-le-François in the villages destroyed in the first Battle of the Marne.

From the spring of 1917 to the spring of 1918, almost all of the interest was concentrated in the newly released region where the refugees were struggling to get back. By the time of the great German advance in March, 1918, there were already, according to the official list of the Ministry of Liberated Regions, fourteen societies doing general relief work in the devastated regions, and twelve societies and at least eleven more private groups doing relief work in particular localities.

L'Aisne Dévastée was giving relief anywhere in the department of the Aisne.

The American Relief Clearing House, which was taken over by the American Red Cross in June, 1917, was giving supplies to societies that were working locally.

The Canadian Red Cross was distributing supplies generally.

L'Œuvre des Colonies de Vacances de la Chaussée du Maine was distributing supplies where they could be best used.

La Provence pour le Nord, especially the

Marseilles Committee, sent plants to be used in gardens in the North.

La Société des Agriculteurs de France distributed seeds, fertilizer, and agricultural tools and machines.

The Students' Atelier Reunions, under the direction of the Rev. and Mrs. Shurtleff, did general relief work.

Le Comité de l'Aisne, with M. Gabriel Hanotaux as president, distributed relief in general in the Aisne.

Le Comité de Compiègne was particularly interested in the department of the Oise.

Le Comité des Communes Libérées de l'Oise, with Sénateur Noel, the Mayor of Noyon, as president, was particularly active in the region around Noyon.

Le Comité du Secours National helped all of the various other societies.

Small groups organized by Madame de Cosse-Brissac and Monsieur Holman-Black, and by Madame Thibaut, did general relief work.

More particularly, The American Fund for French Wounded (Comité Civil), under the direction of Miss Morgan and Mrs. Dike, took



care of the region around Blérancourt in the Aisne.

The Smith College Relief Unit took care of fifteen villages between Ham and Nesle in the Somme, with their headquarters at Grécourt.

The American Red Cross repaired thirty-five or forty buildings in five villages in the Somme, northeast of Nesle, and did general relief work throughout the whole region.

The French Wounded Emergency Fund, in collaboration with the British Red Cross, took care of nineteen villages in the Somme, between Péronne and Ham.

The British Society of Friends put up their barracks in five villages west of Ham, and repaired houses in several villages north of Roye.

Le Comité Central Américain and L'aide Immédiate, under the direction of Mrs. Dur-yea, took care of all of the villages in the canton of Roye.

L'Assistance aux Dépôts d'Eclopés, under the direction of Madame Odier and Made-moiselle Javal, looked after a number of villages in the western sector of the Somme.

Le Village Reconstitué, under the direction of Monsieur d'Eichtal and Monsieur Letrosne, organized dispensaries at Noyon, Bailly, Lassigny, and Ribecourt, in the Oise.

La Renaissance des Foyers Dévastés par la Guerre, with Madame St. René-Taillandier as president, looked after fifteen villages in the Oise, between Noyon and Roye.

Le Secrétariat Français des Villages Libérés, with Madame Moreau as president, was especially interested in Chiry-Ourscamps in the Oise.

L'Union des Femmes de France, with Madame Pérouse as president, and with Monsieur Verne in charge, took care of Nesle and nine villages near it.

Madame de Ste. Aldegonde took care of Villequier-Aumont in the Aisne; Madame Brincard, of Béthancourt in the Aisne; Madame de Chabannes-la-Pallice, of Maucourt and Quesmy in the Oise; Madame d'Escayrac, of Passel in the Oise; Madame d'Evry, of Nampoel in the Oise; Madame Jacques Faure, of Babœuf, took care of Grandru, Babœuf, and Appilly in the Oise, and of Neufieux, Caumont, and Commenchon in the Aisne;

Madame Geoffray, of Manicamp in the Aisne; Madame Getting, of Larbroye in the Oise; Madame de Langlade, of Cuts and Caisnes in the Oise; Madame Lefèvre, of Mondescourt in the Oise; and Monsieur and Madame Lu-chaire, of Marest-Dampcourt in the Aisne.

In fact, in almost every one of the devastated villages where twenty or more people had returned, there was a relief society to help them with food, clothing, furniture, bedding, utensils, tools, agricultural implements, farm animals—in short, with everything the refugees needed to help them get back on their feet. Almost all of these societies stayed right on the spot during the winter of 1917–18, despite the fact that it was one of the coldest and most disagreeable winters that there had been for some time. Almost all of them were there in March, 1918, to help the refugees evacuate when the Germans were advancing so rapidly. One and all they did a splendid and devoted work.

From the end of March, 1918, until August, or rather September, 1918, no refugee could get back into the devastated regions, except of course for the small devastated area in the

Marne, the Meuse, and the Meurthe-et-Moselle, where the first Battle of the Marne had taken place. In September refugees began to come back, but very slowly at first, and it really was not until some little time after the armistice that the people began to arrive in any appreciable numbers. Some of the relief societies disappeared, but others followed the people, although during the winter of 1918-19 very little relief work was done. The American Red Cross started shortly after the armistice helping the returning prisoners as they came back through the liberated regions, and around the first of January they started their wholesale relief work from Belgium down to Alsace. The American Committee for devastated France started first at Château-Thierry, later moved up to Vic-sur-Aisne, and then back to its old quarters at Blérancourt. The Smith College Relief Unit started in again the first of January, at its old headquarters at Grécourt. The British Friends' Mission started in in September, 1918, repairing houses and putting up their portable huts from Château-Thierry to Rheims; in the spring of 1919 they went back to their old region, near Ham

and Roye. The Belgian Relief Commission put up in the North three hundred and sixty large barracks with labor from the United States Naval Reserve Corps. Meanwhile, together with the British and French armies and the chambers of commerce, it fed nearly two million people in the liberated regions until the French Government could build up its own machinery for handling the problem.

Most of the relief societies that we are describing here are American. That is only because I happen to know more intimately what they are doing than I do about the French societies. We must not go away with the idea that America is doing it all: far from it. At best we are doing only a small part of what is being accomplished. All honor must be given to such French societies as the Secours National, le Secours d'Urgence, l'Aisne Devastée, le Pas de Calais Devasté, the three societies of the French Red Cross, and many others for the wonderful work they are doing.

The best way to get an idea of how private relief work was carried on, is to take up the work of a few special organizations. The first foreign society in the field on the French

side of the line was the British Society of Friends who came to France early in the autumn of 1914 and started right in doing urgent relief work similar to that which they had done in France during the War of 1870. They installed themselves first in the Marne and the Meuse, along the line of the Battle of the Marne, especially in the charming little old towns of Sermaize-les-Bains, Pargny, Heiltz-le-Maurupt, Revigny, and many other villages between Bar-le-Duc and Vitry-le-François. As the former inhabitants returned to these villages after the Battle of the Marne, the Friends, both men and women, helped them in every way that they could. Up to the time of the German offensive in March, 1917, they had helped nearly 12,000 families, or about 35,000 people in 282 different villages. They had put up 500 temporary houses and 27 barns. They had distributed some 12,000 packages of clothes and as many more packages of bedding; also nearly 5,000 articles of furniture. In addition they had distributed about 125,000 francs' worth of seeds, fertilizer, and farming-machines and tools, to say nothing of 1,200 chickens and rabbits.

In Sermaize and Pargny they constructed whole villages of brick, enough for thirty or forty families in each case, with a charming little garden behind each house. They went into the business of building barracks on a considerable scale, establishing a saw-mill and shops at Ornans and Dôle in the Jura; and wherever they found a refugee family living in a cellar for lack of better lodgings, they would set up one of their portable houses with two or three rooms and a shed. The French Government supplied them with the material, but they furnished all of the labor themselves.

They started schools for the children and a cottage hospital at Sermaize-les-Bains, and sent out their doctors and district nurses wherever there were no French doctors available. They established a children's convalescent home at the Château de Bettancourt, in the Marne. It was of the greatest help to invalid children. But probably the thing that was most appreciated was their maternity hospital at Châlons-sur-Marne, where up to the signing of the armistice over a thousand children were born.

After the German offensive in 1918 the

Friends worked with the refugees in a number of places throughout the interior of France, and put up their barracks wherever the French Government felt they were most needed.

When the Germans were pushed back in the summer of 1918, they followed right back into the district between Château-Thierry and Rheims, and did splendid relief work similar to that which they had done in the Marne and the Meuse a few years before. They put up several hundred of their barracks and repaired a number of houses in the vicinity of Château-Thierry.

Meanwhile, in the summer of 1917, the American Friends' Mission, which was connected with the American Red Cross, joined forces with the British Society of Friends and the two combined soon had nearly six hundred active workers. The help of the American Red Cross, with supplies and transportation, made it possible for them considerably to extend their field of usefulness.

On October 8, 1918, the Sous-Préfet of Verdun formally asked the Anglo-American Friends' Mission if they would take over all of the relief work for the returning refugees in



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the whole district to the west of Verdun. This is a charming agricultural country, now almost completely destroyed, as for the better part of four years it was the battle-ground first of the French and later of the Americans. The district runs nearly over to Sainte-Menehould, and includes part of the forest of the Argonne and the famous towns of Clermont-en-Argonne and Varennes-en-Argonne, running almost up to Montfaucon. There are some sixty villages in the district.

They took it over as soon as they could and called in their forces from other parts of the devastated regions, so that before long they had nearly five hundred men and women at work in these villages. When I visited them there in April, 1919, they were fully installed in a big French farm group, the owner of which had run away to Switzerland at the outbreak of the war. There were a hundred and thirty Friends living in barracks which they had inherited from a camouflage section of the French Army, and all the barns were full of supplies which they were giving or selling to the refugees. There were a number of big camions in the yard which had been loaned

them by the American Army, and even about twenty side-cars which the American Army had let them have. They had tractors and all kinds of agricultural machinery, everything necessary to help get the fields back under cultivation.

About one hundred men were busy erecting portable houses. I went to the little town of Neuilly, where they were putting up about fifty-two of their huts at the particular request of the mayor. I asked to meet Mayor Jacqueman and found him living in a little two-room portable house; the kitchen table was spread with papers and books on which he was conducting unaided the whole official business of the town. He told me that he decided who should have the portable houses and he was very careful to see that no one who had any amount of money of his own should get one. About half of the houses were on private property and the rest on public land. Wherever possible a rent of 112 francs a year was charged for the house. When people could not afford to pay, their rent was remitted.

In June, 1919, the Friends were putting up barracks at the rate of twenty-five a week, and

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in all they had erected up to that time in the Marne, the Meuse, the Aisne, and the Somme, nearly nine hundred houses, enough to house over three thousand persons. During the same time they had repaired about eight hundred houses, enough to take care of another three thousand persons; all of this in addition to the work they had done on stables and barns.

As the American Army moved out of the district, the Friends bought up five dumps, which gave them a quantity of material for distribution. They are now gradually turning their attention from relief work to more permanent social-welfare work and about one hundred and fifty members will continue during the winter of 1919-20 helping the returning refugees through the trying period.

The civilian division of the American Fund for French Wounded started work in the devastated region of the Aisne, with a center at Blérancourt, very shortly after the Germans were pushed back in the spring of 1917. It did a great deal of most useful relief work in about twenty of the surrounding villages. It gave people food, clothing, furniture, household utensils, farming-implements—in fact,

everything needed to set up life again. Its doctors and nurses found an unlimited amount to do.

In April, 1918, the civilian division was incorporated as a separate body called The American Committee for Devastated France. However, it could not go back to the devastated regions at that time, as they were all occupied by the Germans, so it looked up the refugees from its own villages around Blérancourt, wherever they happened to be in the interior of France, and gave them such care as it could.

As soon as the Germans were driven back around Château-Thierry in July and August, 1918, the committee established itself in Château-Thierry and started relief work in the neighborhood. As the Germans were driven farther back the workers followed after them, first taking up their quarters in Vic-sur-Aisne, and finally moving back to Blérancourt. The committee then took over the relief work of about one hundred villages in the Aisne, with centers at Vic-sur-Aisne, Blérancourt, and Soissons. It has given about seventy-five thousand fruit-trees to the natives and about a

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million vegetable plants. It did a particularly active work in two hundred villages in the Aisne in helping the Hoover commission distribute food and clothing.

Its chief work to-day is helping the returning refugees to get back on a normal basis. It is giving French shopkeepers a start wherever they are ready to begin. It is selling tools, animals, and seeds to any farmer ready to keep on once he can be given the initial start. It is helping building-workmen get under way by furnishing them with tools and materials and by providing a work-shop with machinery where they can turn out doors, windows, furniture, and hardware. Aside from its regular medical and nursing visiting service, it is collaborating with the American Women's Hospitals. It has established an emergency hospital center at Blérancourt. In addition it is helping in the forming of reconstruction co-operative societies and agricultural syndicates.

The Smith College Relief Unit, with sixteen members, arrived in France in August, 1917, to do rehabilitation work in the devastated regions. Until January, 1918, it worked in co-operation with the American Fund for French

Wounded. In January, 1918, it became affiliated with the American Red Cross. Since January of 1919 it has been working independently.

In September, 1917, at the request of the French Ministry of the Interior, the unit took charge of fifteen villages in the Somme, with headquarters in the charming grounds of the château at Grécourt which was destroyed by the Germans. All during the winter of 1917-18 it did most effective relief work for the refugees that had returned into the devastated villages. Its workers lived with their people and knew them all intimately, and there is no doubt that their care and personal attention meant everything to the health and personal comfort of the villagers during that trying winter.

The members of the unit lived themselves in tents or flimsy wooden barracks throughout all the storms and freezing weather, their only heat being furnished by little camp stoves in which they burned such green wood as they could find in the neighborhood. Their devotion endeared them greatly to the refugees.

At the end of March, 1918, in the great German offensive, the Smith Unit women stayed

until the last moment, helping the refugees to get away and serving hot chocolate and food to the worn-out British soldiers that kept pouring through their place, until finally at about four o'clock one morning a British officer rode up and told them that the German machine-guns were only a few miles down the road. Their auto-trucks were ready and they left all of their barracks and stores behind, asking the British to burn them so that they could not fall into the hands of the Germans. Then they picked up all of the French refugees that were left and went to Montdidier, only to be chased out of that city, and so on to Amiens. Meanwhile they were making constant trips back and forth, evacuating the refugees. At every stopping-place they set up a canteen to feed the hungry people as they poured through.

From then until the first of January, 1919, they worked continuously with the American Red Cross, organizing canteens and doing hospital work for the American soldiers. But at Christmas-time in 1918 they returned to their former villages in the Somme and found that about three hundred people had already come back and were living in misery because

now the villages were completely destroyed. I went back with them on New Year's Day in 1919, when they distributed four truck-loads of food, clothing, and utensils to the refugees who had returned for a second time. I shall never forget how glad the villagers were to see them, nor how grateful the people were for the help and the knowledge that the unit was coming back to live among them. Everything seemed hopeless in that region, where not a building was habitable and where most of the country looked as though a battle had just taken place. Except that almost all of the bodies had been buried, nothing seemed to have been picked up. In the unending cold and sleet of the winter the situation was most disheartening. The return of the Smith Unit was the one thing that could have helped the morale of the peasants. Its members settled down again in Grécourt in January, just as soon as the French Army could put up some barracks for them.

They divide their work into visiting, agricultural work, stores, children's, and medical departments. In the visiting department they have three trained social-service workers, each of whom is responsible for five or six villages;



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they go from home to home, investigate every case where help is asked, report to the unit's doctor and nurse every case of sickness and then do follow-up work under the direction of the medical department. They know all the people and everything about them and so can give the most intelligent kind of help. Of course a detailed card-catalogue is kept of all of the cases.

As most of the villagers are farmers, the agricultural department is of the greatest use. They have brought in and sold about a hundred cows and many hundred chickens, rabbits, and pigs; also farm implements, seed-potatoes, and vegetable seeds. All of these they sold in the beginning at half-cost, but now they are selling at about cost so as not to compete with the local merchants who are getting reestablished. They even have a tractor which they are renting at a reasonable price to neighboring farmers. They keep eight cows and sell the milk to sick people and little children at six sous a liter. They are providing fruit-trees to take the place of all of those cut down by the Germans.

Their store, and especially their traveling

stores, have been most popular. When their big truck, looking like a Yankee peddler's cart, drives into a village, the whole town—men, women, and children—come out of their cellars, their lean-tos, or their barracks, if they are lucky enough to have them, and crowd around it; it is just like a village fair. They take the greatest care in choosing the pattern of their dress material. Incidentally the store receipts for the month of March, 1919, were 10,781 fr. 90. But what they are particularly trying to do is to help the shopkeepers in the various villages to get started in business again. The unit sells them supplies at cost and fixes the price at which they may re-sell. It hopes very shortly to turn all of its store business over to them.

The unit has made a great feature of its work among the several hundred children that have already come back. Until very recently no schools had been started, despite the fact that many teachers had returned, because there was no place in which to hold classes. However, by the first of July several schools had been opened. In the meantime the Smith Unit workers were teaching the children out-

door games and recreation, and were trying to bring back the native songs and dances. They are establishing a library of children's books which they are lending through the school-teachers, first in one village and then in another. At the same time they have been buying maps, charts, blackboards, and other school supplies, so that the schools could start as soon as a place was available.

The Smith Unit's doctor and nurse have always been most popular, especially as there has been no French doctor or nurse available nearby. The unit has a dispensary at Grécourt which is busy at all hours, and the doctor and nurse make a regular round of visits in the villages. More than one child's life has been saved by their untiring care. Older people as well as children from time to time are wounded by exploding ammunition. Now the medical service is making a sanitary survey of all the villages; it is having the wells cleaned and is following up carefully the matters of sewage-disposal, manure piles, flies, etc.

The character of the unit's work is necessarily changing all the time, as living conditions

return to a more normal basis. Emergency relief work is no longer as necessary as it was. Local stores are being established everywhere. A large part of the area is now back under cultivation. The portable houses are beginning to arrive and everything that can be repaired is being made habitable. The big need of the future, the greatest usefulness of a group like the Smith College Relief Unit, is to leave a permanent heritage in the land, to give the local leaders the benefit of their training and experience in health and social-welfare work. To that end the workers are now taking in as collaborators French nurses who will carry on their medical and sanitary work after the unit leaves; and they are starting community social centers, about which will be grouped all that is necessary for the social well-being of the men, women, and children of the neighborhood. At the same time they are helping the peasants in their relations with the authorities in all matters that have to do with reconstruction, including the founding of reconstruction coöperative societies and agricultural syndicates. Theirs is a splendid constructive pro-

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gram, one that could well be repeated throughout the devastated regions; a program most appreciated by the French Government.

All during the first years of the war the American Relief Clearing House supplied many French and American relief societies with money, food, clothing, and other things that had been sent from America. Most of this, to be sure, went for military relief purposes, but a certain amount went to help the refugees.

When the American Red Cross arrived in France in June, 1917, it took over the American Relief Clearing House and all of its obligations, and then proceeded to broaden its field, helping any worthy relief society. Owing to the retreat of the Germans in the spring of 1917, and the number of French and Allied relief societies that had gone into the Somme, the Aisne, and the Oise, to take care of the returning refugees, the American Red Cross had a splendid opportunity to use its money and supplies to excellent advantage by working through these groups. It undertook virtually no direct distribution to the refugees.

However, it did try out an experiment in

reconstruction in five villages of the Somme. From October, 1917, until they were driven out by the Germans in March, 1918, from twelve to sixty French workmen repaired about forty houses and barns, all of which were destroyed again by the Germans before they were driven out in the summer of 1918.

During the spring and summer of 1918 the American Red Cross work with French civilians was most active in the interior of France, where the society organized a relief service in each one of the seventy or more departments.

Soon after the armistice the American Red Cross established several canteens and relief stations at Rheims, St. Quentin, Mézières, and elsewhere, to take care of the French military prisoners and civilians released from Germany. By the end of the year it had effected a vast organization for wholesale relief, from Belgium all the way down to Alsace. Six districts were created in France, with headquarters at Lille, Amiens, Laon, Mézières, Châlons-sur-Marne, and Verdun, and a seventh district in Belgium, with warehouses at Bruges, Adinkerke, and Courtrai. At each of the French centers a huge warehouse was installed, each

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surrounded by smaller distributing centers. Each of these warehouses was stocked with clothing, furnishings, dry-goods, beds, bedding, and furniture, some tools and agricultural implements, about two hundred barracks in all, and a certain small amount of food. These goods were given by the American Red Cross to local committees or societies, which sold the supplies at a reasonable price to the refugees. When no local society existed, the local distribution was undertaken by the mayor and his helpers. There were in June nearly 250 of these local committees and societies, besides about 35 local work-rooms. The Red Cross was reaching through these committees about 325,000 people in over 2,000 towns and villages. It took a personnel of 222 people to carry on this wholesale operation and to transport the supplies in 102 trucks and automobiles allotted to this purpose.

During the month of May, 373,859 refugees returned, and during the same period the American Red Cross received at its local centers over 221 car-loads of goods, and reshipped 307 car-loads and 124 truck-loads, weighing 3,500 tons. In May alone 1,400,000 articles



*French Official Photo.*

**A HOUSE DESTROYED BY A NINETEEN-INCH GERMAN SHELL**





*French Official Photo.*

**A HOUSE REPAIRED BY THE FRIENDS**



**REFUGEES FROM THE NORTH IN BARRACKS AT DREUX,  
NORMANDY**

were distributed, valued at 4,420,000 francs.

While the American Red Cross gave its supplies to the local societies, it expected them to sell the articles at a price which would not be too far below the current prices in the neighboring stores; and with the money coming in from the sales the local societies were encouraged to buy medicines, farming-tools, and many other things that the American Red Cross could not supply from its available stores. Almost all of the American Red Cross supplies came from the liquidation of Red Cross affairs.

As part of its general policy the American Red Cross is closing up its wholesale warehouses during the summer of 1919, and turning over all of its supplies to the French local committees and societies, which will carry on the work, with supplies which they will continue to receive from the French Ministry of Liberated Regions and from other sources.

Important as this immediate relief work has been, the great contribution in the liberated regions is the creation of these local committees and societies who are learning how to handle relief work efficiently and who now can be ex-

pected to carry on the work after the Red Cross leaves. The departments have differed greatly, according to the initiative and the organizing ability of the *préfet* or the secretary-general who was the responsible representative of the Ministry of Liberated Regions for the department. In the Pas-de-Calais, for example, nine strong societies existed before the Red Cross came in the field, and the devastated region had been divided up among them by the Government in proportion to what each could handle. In the neighboring department of the Nord, there were very few committees, so the American Red Cross working in harmony with the French Government has organized thirty-five or forty local committees.

The organizations that have just been described in some detail were chosen at random as typical of the various activities in the devastated regions. There were many others—most of them French—that were doing most excellent work and they one and all have had a decided effect on the morale of the returning refugees.

The great problem now is what these organizations are going to do in the future. It is

obvious that as life gets back nearer and nearer to a normal basis, as stores are opened up, as fields are plowed, as roads are repaired, as shelter is provided, as the railroads begin to run normally, and in particular as the French Government services are becoming better organized, there is less and less need for outside relief. Thus the whole tendency now on the part of the relief societies is to try to do something of permanent value for the future, and in particular at the request of the Ministry of Liberated Regions to try to establish health and social-welfare centers and to train a French personnel to carry them on.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE STATE PAYS ALL WAR DAMAGES

On December 26, 1914, the French Parliament enunciated the principle, unique in the world's history, that the State should pay in full all material war damages suffered by any one in France. It also demanded the payment of these damages by the enemy. The whole country has held strongly to this principle ever since.

Very soon after the beginning of the war the French Government began to draft a bill determining in detail just how the State should reimburse the individual for his material losses occasioned by any act of war.

On May 7, 1915, the Chamber of Deputies Committee began the consideration of the Government bill known as the Desplas Bill. A number of French societies took an active part in helping the committee frame this bill, especially Le Comité National pour la Réparation Intégrale des Dommages causés par le fait de

la Guerre; La Fédération Nationale des Associations Départementales des Sinistrés; Le Musée Social; L'Union des Comités Départementaux des Sinistrés, and many other organizations, in particular the various technical associations. The committee reported to the Chamber on July 18, 1916.

On January 23, 1917, the Chamber of Deputies adopted a bill which was the result of these two years of work. In general it provided that any one who had suffered material war damage should be reimbursed by the State for the full value of his damage. This was to be estimated not only on the basis of values as they were in 1914, but if he rebuilt within the same commune he should receive from the State a supplementary damage equal to the increased cost of materials and of labor at the time of rebuilding.

This bill then went to the Senate committee, which considered it continuously during 1917. On December 22, 1917, this House adopted a bill similar to the Chamber of Deputies Bill but with a number of modifications. The chief difference in the Senate project was in regard to the much discussed question of *emploi*, that is

to say, rebuilding in the same community; for the Senate went unanimously on record to the effect that any one who had suffered war damage should be paid in full at present cost of replacement, regardless of where he rebuilt or whether or not he rebuilt at all. The Senate argued that it was for the good of France as a whole, and only just, that every person receiving war damages should have the right to decide, himself, where and how he would use his money. The Chamber of Deputies, on the other hand—which is elected locally, each deputy having a specific constituency of one hundred to one hundred and fifty communes—felt that unless there was in the law a special inducement to people to reinstall themselves in the devastated regions, the greater number might take the easier way and make their homes elsewhere in France, or even in foreign countries, whereupon the devastated regions, formerly the richest part of France, would become comparatively a desert.

The Chamber of Deputies took the modifications of the Senate under consideration and numerous meetings were held to try to determine on compromises which would satisfy both

Houses, with the result that on February 1, 1919, the Chamber adopted the Senate draft in its general lines but with minor modifications. Subsequent deliberations took place in the Senate in March, in the Chamber in April, and later in April in the Senate.

On April 17, 1919, the Senate adopted and the President of the Republic promulgated a war-damage law virtually identical with that voted by the Chamber of Deputies in February. The law was in effect from this date. It is interesting to note that the Belgian war-damage bill, similar in so many ways, was adopted and promulgated on May 10, 1919, together with various additions on May 15 and on June 1, 1919.

The French law contains seventy articles and about fourteen thousand words. Because it is said to be the first law of its kind in history, and because of its immense effect on the future of the devastated regions and, indeed, of the whole of France, a study of its leading principles and provisions is well worth while.

The law defines the following material damages as coming within its scope:

- (1) Any requisitions made by allied or



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enemy troops; any contributions, taxes, or fines imposed by the enemy; and any damage caused by the lodging of enemy or allied troops.

(2) Everything material that has been stolen or lost, including crops, animals, trees, goods, furniture, stocks, and bonds; any deterioration or partial destruction caused to any of the above, regardless of the author; and any loss of movable property in France or abroad occurring during an evacuation or a return.

(3) Any deterioration, or partial or total destruction to any building or any machines, tools, animals, or accessories having to do with any commercial, industrial, or agricultural exploitation.

(4) Damages shall be paid even where property was in a military zone and even when they were damages occasioned by war preparatory or preventive measures.

(5) Any damage caused to fishing-boats.

All demands for the payment of damages are grouped and appraised and the damages fixed by categories.

Where the enemy has held part of the capital of a society, the members of the society will

be entitled to an indemnity equal to the benefit they should have derived normally from this capital if this had not been taken.

The right to receive damages applies to strangers in France, according to conditions which will be determined by treaties between France and the various nations in question.

The material damages to be paid by the State include not only the loss sustained, according to its appraised value just before war was declared, but also the supplementary cost of replacing buildings or goods to-day. The supplementary expenses are given to the applicant only in case he rebuilds or reestablishes any industrial, commercial, or agricultural property (regardless of whether or not it is of the same use as previously) in the same commune it was in before, or within a radius of fifty kilometers and not outside the devastated region. However, where the State expropriates agricultural land the farmer may get the supplementary damages if he reestablishes himself anywhere within the devastated region. Depreciation and obsolescence are subtracted from the appraised value of the property; but where a man rebuilds in his former

neighborhood he is entitled to a sum up to ten thousand francs from the State to offset these deductions, and if he needs more than this to offset them the State will loan him the money for twenty-five years at 8 per cent. interest. For agricultural buildings not over 20 per cent. shall be deducted in any case of *remploi*.

All reconstruction must conform to the laws and rules of public sanitation and health, and to new rules which are being laid down by the Superior Council of Hygiene. Any supplementary cost to the community of such improvement is assumed by the State. If the war-damage tribunal finds any reconstruction contrary to public health or general economic interest, it can interdict it.

Where a war-damaged property is not re-established in the same region, the supplementary expense due to the increased cost of rebuilding and material to-day, is attributed by the State to a common fund to be used for the advantage of the devastated regions. Meanwhile the property-owner receives a bond from the State representing the money due him and yielding 5 per cent. interest annually. These bonds are not negotiable for five years, but

money can be borrowed on them as security; starting at the end of the sixth year, the bonds will be amortized in ten equal annual payments.

An applicant has two years after his damage has been fixed in which to decide whether he will reestablish his property in the same neighborhood or not. If he does, he is expected to furnish, with his demand for the supplementary expenses, plans, specifications, and estimates of the work to be done or the objects to be bought. There are a number of special clauses which take care of the right of co-partners or other members of a society interested, the lessee, the holder of a mortgage or of a lien on the property, also the people affected by any public or private restrictions on the property.

In the case of any public building or any religious building, the damage consists of the sum needed to erect a building of the same character, importance, and use as the destroyed building. The Minister of Fine Arts has appointed a commission to follow up all such cases.

The value of any movable property is based

on its value June 30, 1914, or, if it was bought after that time, on its cost when bought. The supplementary damages represent the difference between the value determined as described above and the cost of replacement at the time that the appraisal is made.

Supplementary damages are given only for movable objects included in the following list:

(1) Raw materials and supplies needed by an industrial plant to put it back in normal running order for an initial period of three months; this also includes articles being fabricated at the time of the destruction, and the articles needed in the exercise of a profession.

(2) Animals, fodder, fertilizer, seeds, crops, and anything else necessary to keep an agricultural plant going until the next harvest.

(3) Any tools, machinery, or other articles or installation needed in commerce or the exercise of a profession; and any raw materials or goods needed for the running of any business or industry during the first three months.

(4) Any personal property in connection with the home, such as furniture, furnishings, linen, and even any ornaments, provided that

no one of the latter shall be reimbursed at more than three thousand francs.

Bonds and mortgages of the French Government will be replaced by others of the same sort. For any other bonds, mortgages, or similar papers, coming from any French or foreign source, the State will pay damages on the basis of the quoted value at the time of the appraisal of the loss.

A public notary is entitled to receive damages equal to the difference between the value of his bureau just before the war and at the time of appraisal. If the bureau is suppressed, special damages are awarded depending on the case.

If the applicant for indemnity is receiving an indemnity for the same things from any other source, such as insurance, the sums received outside shall be deducted from the amount awarded by the State, except that the State will reimburse premiums paid. The money spent by the State for temporary shelter for returning refugees or for animals and furniture is not deducted from the total of the indemnity. For temporary construction an

applicant can receive an advance of not over one third of the total of his indemnity, and if he is going to reconstruct he can receive 5 per cent. annually on the balance of the indemnity until he does.

The damages enumerated above are to be appraised and determined by commissions to be created by the Government as soon as possible, at least one to each canton. A special commission in the Department of Public Works in Paris will take care of all matters that have to do with boats or water transportation. Each commission is composed of five members; the president is to be a judge of a civil court, or in any case a member of the bar; one member of the commission is to be named by the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Liberated Regions; one is to be an architect, a contractor, or an engineer; one is to be a person who is specially competent to appraise furniture and movable objects; one is to be a farmer, a manufacturer, a merchant, or a workman, according to the nature of the damages to be appraised. In addition there is to be a competent secretary. A quorum consists of the president and three members. When the damage to be

appraised has to do with mines, quarries, forests, or ponds, there are to be men especially competent in those subjects on the commission. The same is true in the case of the appraisal of any matter that has to do with boats or navigation.

In each department the *préfet* has to create a special committee to establish unit prices for everything that enters into construction, both for 1914 and for the present day. These units serve as a basis for the appraisals to be made by the cantonal commissions.

Interested persons or societies are requested to submit their applications for indemnities due them just as soon as possible, together with all facts and supporting papers that the cantonal commissions may need. There are a number of special provisions which determine the right to indemnity of wives, minors, incompetents, or absent persons.

The cantonal commission has the right to convoke any interested parties and if there is disagreement among them the commission will try to settle it; if not settled by the commission, the case goes to the proper tribunal.

In the chief town of each *arrondissement*



where there are cantonal commissions, there is a war-damage tribunal. This tribunal consists of a president named by the Minister of Justice, two members and two alternates also named by the Minister of Justice, and two members and two alternates chosen by lot every two months from a list of twenty names selected by the department council.

It should decide all cases submitted to it by the cantonal commissions. The tribunal can subpoena any persons or papers needed.

The decisions of the tribunal are final, except that they can be reviewed by the Conseil d'Etat—that is, the Supreme Court of France in administrative matters—for incompetence, exceeding of powers, or violation of the law.

As soon as a final decision has been reached on the amount of damage to be awarded, the applicant is entitled to a bond from the State for the total amount, and if he decides to re-establish his property he receives a supplementary bond for the amount of the present excess cost of reestablishment. Depreciation and obsolescence will have been deducted from these bonds. The 5 per cent. annual interest on the bonds usually dates from the day when

the damage occurred and is payable in cash.

Where the applicant is ready to reestablish his property in the same region, he has the right within two months after he has been awarded his damage to receive in cash an advance of 25 per cent. on the 1914 appraised value, and in any case at least 3,000 francs and not more than 100,000 francs, except where the war-damage tribunal allows more.

As reconstruction proceeds, or as articles are bought, the applicant has only to present the bills and they will be paid within two months, up to the total appraised value of the property plus the supplementary costs allowed. When the applicant has used up all of his damage, he can borrow from the State at 8 per cent. a sum equal to the amount deducted for depreciation and obsolescence after he has used up the 10,000 francs allowed in certain cases. If the applicant decides to reestablish himself in the devastated regions but not within fifty kilometers of the place where his loss was sustained, he can still receive the above advances from the State up to the total appraised value of the property in 1914.

With the consent of the applicant the State,

instead of paying the indemnity in cash, can give in exchange an equivalent building in the same or a neighboring canton, or equivalent movable objects. The State can also furnish materials or do reconstruction work on its own account.

With the consent of the applicant the State can free itself from its obligations by buying any property at the appraised value.

If the cost of bringing the ground back under cultivation is more than the value of the land itself, the State is bound to expropriate the property at the appraised value.

If the applicant owes any money to the State, it is to be deducted from his awarded indemnity.

In general, interest on the indemnity bonds is calculated from November 11, 1918, at 5 per cent., payable quarterly and in cash. Many special things, however, date from the day the damage was incurred.

If a man has sold a property between the time the damage occurred and the promulgation of this law, he can demand his property back at the price he received for it if he wishes to reconstruct.

Any applicant who wishes to reestablish his property in the devastated regions has the right of priority in the transportation of anything that he may need for this reestablishment.

The State assumes all costs of making property surveys, of clearing out the ruins, of clearing away all unexploded war material, and the State assumes the proprietorship of all such material. It is responsible for all accidents due to the explosion of war material.

The State assumes the cost of the making of all town plans. It will expropriate and pay full appraised value for all land or buildings taken in connection with any public improvement, as determined by the new town plans. It assumes the cost of all improvements required in public sanitation.

The law is applicable to French colonies and protectorates.

The only striking difference between the Belgian law and the French law is that the former provides that if an applicant wishes to receive from the State supplementary damages to cover the increased cost of construction and replacement to-day, he must rebuild within the

same commune; however, the war-damage tribunal has the authority in special cases to allow him to rebuild elsewhere within the kingdom.

Ever since the beginning of the war the State has been making advances to the returning refugees on the principle that as the State was committed to the policy of repayment in full, there was every reason why a certain small percentage of the eventual indemnity should be advanced as needed. On July 5, 1917, a law was passed stating just how and under what conditions damage claims should be filed and verified.

According to government decrees, a man who has suffered a war damage would apply through the mayor of his commune to the *préfet* of the department. The *préfet* would send three experts to make a provision appraisal of the damage, on the basis of values as they were in 1914. Then the *préfet* could make an advance in cash to the applicant, as the latter's bills for reconstruction became due, up to 50 per cent. of the appraised value. On October 12, 1918, this was raised to 75 per cent. of the appraised value, and where the

work of reconstruction was done in common—that is to say, where the individuals were grouped together into a reconstruction coöperative society—they could receive up to 90 per cent. of the appraised value.

Meanwhile, any temporary repairs, the erection of portable houses, and half the cost of providing them, was assumed gratuitously by the State.

Furniture and furnishings were advanced to the applicant at first on the basis of a maximum of 500 francs to a head of a family and 200 francs apiece for other members of the family. On November 2, 1918, this was increased to 1,000 francs for the head of the family, and on February 25, 1919, arrangements were made whereby the State would advance the money in cash so that the applicant could go out and buy the furniture himself.

On July 12, 1918, advances of 1,000 francs per hectare—that is to say, about 400 francs per acre—of cultivable land, were allowed everywhere in the devastated regions. Only 400 francs of this amount could be paid in cash; the other 600 could be used only for the payment of bills for agricultural implements, cattle, fertil-

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izer, seeds, etc. This was later increased to 2,000, 3,000, and even 4,000 francs per hectare in special cases.

On October 13, 1917, and on October 21, 1918, special arrangements were made by the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Liberated Regions respectively for making advances not to exceed 3,000 francs to farmers, shopkeepers, artisans, and small manufacturers, to cover their initial expenses in starting their enterprise again. On February 21, 1919, the same help was extended to the larger manufacturers and to contractors. The advances were based on their necessary expenses for the first three months in getting under way, and should not exceed 12,000 francs per employee. On February 22, 1919, a similar allowance was made for advances to people engaged in a profession, to help them get started, and in this case the total advance was limited to 10,000 francs.

On April 25, 1919, advances were allowed to individuals or reconstruction coöperative societies of from 2 to 4 per cent. of the appraised value of the damage for paying the cost of the

initial work of lawyers, experts, architects, engineers, etc.

Since the passage of the *dommages de guerre* law, on April 17, 1919, the Minister of Liberated Regions has decreed that applicants shall continue to receive the advances which are described above, until such time as the machinery has been prepared for the effective operation of the new law. The cantonal commissions for determining the amount of damages to be paid were in operation by the end of July. There will be in all about eight hundred of these commissions.

Meanwhile the government officers in each department are receiving already hundreds of thousands of requests for the payment of war damages and up to July 1, 1919, it was estimated that the Government had already paid out in advances against the eventual indemnity, something like five hundred million francs.



## CHAPTER VII

### RECENT LAWS AFFECTING RECONSTRUCTION

The war has had an inspiring effect on social legislation in France. There are many people who feel that the new point of view created by the great conflict has advanced social welfare in that country by at least twenty-five years.

This is strikingly true as to legislation long needed with regard to public health, housing, and town-planning, for along each of these lines quite remarkable laws have been voted in France between the signing of the armistice and the signing of peace.

On March 14, 1919, the French Government enacted a law making the improvement of the plans of cities and towns compulsory throughout the republic. It is the first broad compulsory national town-planning law in the world, and France has set a standard which other nations are hastening to copy. It was on the strength of the example set by France that the British House of Commons voted on May 28,

1919, a law making town-planning compulsory throughout England from 1928.

The French town-planning law requires that every town throughout France of over ten thousand inhabitants shall make within three years a plan for its improvement, embellishment, and extension. This plan shall determine the direction, width, and character of the thoroughfares to be created or improved; the location, extent, and lay-out of public open spaces, including parks, playgrounds, and reservations; also the location of public buildings and monuments. The plans are to include, also, recommendations for restrictions in regard to hygiene or esthetics, and also provision for water-supply and sewage-disposal.

Plans must also be made for all subdivisions, all resorts, and all rapidly growing communities.

In particular, any part of any town or village, regardless of its size, which has been wholly or partially destroyed by any act of war, by fire, earthquake, etc., must have a plan made within three months for the improvement of the street alignment and grades of the district in question, accompanied by a study for

the general improvement, embellishment, and extension of the district; and until such plan has been made and approved, no construction, except temporary shelters, can be carried out.

Furthermore, it is understood that if the towns themselves cannot pay the cost of making these plans, the State will do it.

The mayor and the municipal council can choose their own experts to make the plans, which, however, must be passed upon by the Bureau of Hygiene, and then sent to the general town-planning commissioners of the department in which the town is located. The commissioners make their recommendations, or changes, or improvements in the plans, which then go back to the municipal council with the expectation that it will adopt them. Once a plan is adopted, no structure can be erected save where the mayor issues to the owner permission to build.

In addition there is a national town-planning commission which standardizes town-planning practice and issues rules to the municipalities to guide them in the application of the law. It also gives its advice and decision on any problem presented to it from the departments.

By the first of August, 1919, there were several hundred communes in the devastated regions at work on their plans, and departmental town-planning commissions were busy trying to keep up with the flood of plans coming in for their approval.

The next most important law affecting the future planning of towns in the devastated regions is the expropriation law which was enacted on November 6, 1918. This law is an important modification of the famous French law of May 3, 1841, on the expropriation of private property for public use. The three outstanding advantages of the new law are:

(1) That, for the first time in the history of France, the State or the municipality can expropriate for a public use a whole zone, not only the land actually needed for a public improvement, but such extra land as may seem desirable if the State would get as much advantage as possible out of the improvement, either now or in the future.

(2) That the State has a right to impose an excess-benefit tax on any surrounding property

whose value is increased more than 15 per cent. by the improvement.

(3) That the expropriation jury, instead of consisting only of proprietors, as heretofore, shall now consist of anybody who fulfils the conditions necessary for serving on a criminal jury.

Up to July, 1919, this law had not yet been applied, but the French are looking forward with great interest to its application.

The third law of interest in the devastated regions is the one which was voted on November 27, 1918, and revised March 4, 1919, with a view to facilitating the reparceling of rural property and the settling of disputes over the location of party lines. The stranger often wonders at the long plowing-strips which he sees throughout France, and the curious way in which property is broken up into small irregular parcels. These peculiarities are due to the French inheritance laws, which provide that real property must be split up among all the heirs. The result is that parcels tend to grow smaller and smaller, except as they are united again on the initiative of individuals.



**FRENCH ARCHITECTS AND CONTRACTORS IN PARIS INVESTIGATING OFFICIAL EXPERIMENTAL CONSTRUCTION WITH MUD**



**OFFICIAL EXPERIMENTAL FARM BUILDINGS MADE WITH MUD WALLS—PARIS**



**OFFICIAL EXPERIMENT WITH ROUGH BARN CONSTRUCTION—  
PARIS**



**A HOME OF BROKEN BRICKS AND MUD MORTAR, ESMERY  
HALLON, SOMME**

I have heard of a case where one farmer had two hundred and sixty separate parcels of land, all irregular, some of them no bigger than a room. It is almost impossible to improve a town plan or to secure efficiency in farming where land is broken up so queerly.

The new law tends to rectify this trouble by providing that properties in a given district, which have not been built over, can be pooled, new streets and new property lines laid out, and then unified parcels given out to each of the contributing proprietors, the area and quality of such parcels to be equivalent to the aggregate of those contributed to the pool. There would be no cash transaction in this proceeding, except where there were certain buildings or other constructions that could not be taken care of by a simple exchange. It is understood in the law that whenever a property-owner within the district that is being re-parceled does not object to the re-parceling, he may be considered officially to be in favor of it.

Up to July, 1919, this law had not been put into effect in the devastated regions, as the ministerial decree defining the methods of procedure had not been promulgated. It is ex-



pected, however, that the law will be in operation very shortly.

In many ways the most important law of all, as affecting the future of the devastated regions and indirectly the whole of France, is to be found in Article 5 and Article 62 of the law enacted on April 17, 1919, providing for the State reimbursement of war damage. In these articles it is specified that everything constructed in the devastated regions shall conform to the laws and rules of public sanitation, and that the State shall pay the extra cost of all improvements effected by the community.

On June 2, 1919, a decree was published setting forth the application of this law and ordering municipalities to make plans immediately for improving water-supply and sewage-disposal, and insisting that all building plans should be passed upon in regard to sanitation before the owners were allowed to build.

This goes back to the famous public-health law of February 15, 1902, which was a purely permissive law allowing municipalities to create a public-health commission that should control sanitation within the community. Unfortunately, for obvious political reasons this

law has not been very widely applied. However, in July, 1918, the Superior Council of Public Hygiene of France published two model sanitary ordinances, Model A for cities and towns, and Model B for villages and rural communities. These model ordinances were urged upon the various communities throughout the country for their local adoption, and now they are serving as the standard rules that must be conformed to in all reconstruction in the devastated regions.

The model rural sanitary ordinance prohibits thatched roofs, even on barns. It contains a number of provisions for insulating floors and walls to minimize the damp interiors that one finds all through the country districts of France. It orders that kitchens shall be large and well lighted and well ventilated. Every precaution shall be taken against flies in the kitchen. Waste water shall be properly taken care of.

Bedrooms shall be at least 8 feet 8 inches high in clear and there shall be at least 750 cubic feet of air in the room. There shall be at least 15 square feet of window-opening. No one will be allowed to sleep in cellars, attics,

barns, or stables, which means putting an end to the custom prevailing throughout France of having farm-hands sleep in the stables.

A great deal of attention is paid to water-supply, and it is required that water shall be brought directly from its source wherever possible; that wells shall have tight walls and a high curb and be located as far as possible from water-closets and manure piles.

All of the farm-buildings in which animals are housed shall be kept as dry as possible. Again, everything shall be done to keep out the flies.

All manure shall be removed at least twice a week in winter and at least three times a week in summer, and the farmers are absolutely prohibited from letting it stay along the street, or against houses, or near the water-supply. The purin must be collected in tight cisterns. Unsanitary waste matter must not be thrown into any stream or pond and shall be deposited as far as possible from any house or street. Greatest care must be taken in the location and installation and up-keep of water-closets or privies.

Any case of infectious disease must be declared, and isolated wherever possible. Everything that has to do with the sick person must be disinfected.

The model urban sanitary ordinance has some interesting additions to the one for rural communities. For example, it requires that every inhabited room shall contain at least 90 square feet of floor space, and the area of the window-openings in each room shall be not less than one sixth of the area of the floor.

Sleeping in cellars is prohibited, and even where a cellar is inhabited only during the day, its floor must be not more than 4 feet below the level of the street.

The first and second floor must be at least 9 feet 4 inches high. Buildings on the street line are limited to a height equal to the width of the street, plus from 18 to 30 feet; but on all new streets buildings can be no higher than the street is wide. Private roads must be at least 30 feet wide; interior courts must be at least half as wide as they are high. Even light-shafts must have at least 150 square feet of area.

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Running water shall be easily accessible to every one. Wells may be used only under special conditions.

Contrary to the usual practice in country districts, waste water must not be thrown into the rain-water down-spouts.

Every lodging with two rooms or over not including the kitchen, must have its own separate, well-lighted water-closet. Water-closets must not communicate directly with bedrooms or kitchens. Wherever there are sewers in the street, every house on the street must connect with them. Cesspools are prohibited. In towns of over twenty thousand inhabitants no building shall be done except with a permit from the mayor. Every infraction of these rules is punished by a fine.

The application of these laws means everything for the future of the devastated regions, and indirectly for France as a whole. The republic is taking a long step forward. She is showing to the world that she means to rebuild the devastated regions in a way that will be worthy of her artistic traditions, worthy of the sacrifices of the war, worthy of France.

## CHAPTER VIII

### GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION FOR RECONSTRUCTION

As we have seen, the French Government has been actively interested in the liberated and the devastated regions from the very beginning of the war. In August, 1914, as the refugees were driven west and south by the advancing German Army, the Minister of the Interior instructed the *préfets* of the invaded departments to use a free hand in taking care of the civilians, and all through the interior of France they were instructed to do everything necessary to shelter, feed, clothe, and even find work for the refugees.

As the Germans were driven back after the Battle of the Marne, an area of some 7,000 or 8,000 square miles was liberated, in which there were serious problems of immediate relief, and gradually increasing problems of agricultural, industrial, and commercial reestablishment.

In December, 1914, the French Govern-

ment, which was then sitting at Bordeaux, voted a credit of 800,000,000 francs on which the *préfets* of the liberated regions were virtually given carte blanche to draw for the relief of their people, and to help them get back on their feet. For the first two years of the war the expenditure of this money was in the hands of the Service of Control and Accounting of the Ministry of the Interior. On July 20, 1915, the Minister of the Interior issued a decree calling for the declaration and appraisal of damages throughout the devastated regions. Early in 1916 the Ministry of the Interior created a special service of reconstitution, with Monsieur Bluzet as director, to handle all matters that had to do with the liberated regions.

In May, 1916, the Government created an interministerial committee, composed of representatives of all of the French ministries that had to do with the liberated regions. The function of this committee was to coördinate the work of relief and reestablishment undertaken or projected by the various government bureaus. It appointed several technical commissions to advise it on various problems that interested it.



**REBUILDING A STORE AT RHEIMS**



**THE BAKER'S HOUSE AT LA BASSÉE**





*French Official Photo.*

**A HOUSE REPAIRED BY THE AMERICAN RED CROSS**



**QUIMPER, BRITTANY**

**Twenty-five hundred refugees were housed in these barracks.**

Meanwhile, both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate appointed various committees to consider liberated-regions problems and an interparliamentary committee was formed, composed of all the Senators and Deputies from the invaded and liberated departments. They acted as a *liaison* and interpreter between their constituents and the Government.

Early in 1917 the Minister of the Interior extended his service of reconstitution, organizing a technical bureau for repairing damaged buildings and for the manufacturing of portable houses. Meanwhile, despite the fact that the war-indemnity bill had not been voted, he was allowed to make advances to returning refugees on account of their eventual indemnities.

For rebuilding, these advances were not allowed to exceed 50 per cent. of the value of the destroyed buildings before the war. Small advances were made to farmers for the things they needed to get for their farms; and advances were made to householders for furniture and tools. Wherever possible, however, the Government provided the articles themselves instead of advancing the cash.

In the spring of 1917, with the German retreat, five special *sous-préfets* were appointed, each to take a specified part of the devastated regions from which the Germans had just been driven out, and to devote all of his energy to relief and reestablishment.

In August, 1917, the French Parliament voted two credits, each of 100,000,000 francs—one to the Ministry of Commerce for the purchase of machinery and material needed to reestablish industry in the liberated regions, and the other to the Ministry of Agriculture for the purchase of implements, animals, seed, fertilizer, fruit-trees, and even tractors, to help agricultural reconstitution.

In the summer of 1917 a special technical service for reconstruction and for putting the soil back into condition for use was created in the Ministry of Public Works. This service took over various of the functions heretofore exercised by the Ministry of the Interior.

In November, 1917, it had become so obvious that there must be a single head and direction for all of the civilian work in the liberated regions that the Government created a special ministry to handle it, with Monsieur Lebrun

at its head. It was called the Ministère du Blocus et des Régions Libérées. The minister was expected to handle the problems of the war blockade as well as those of the liberated regions.

For convenience of handling, the work in the liberated regions was divided into four services:

(1) The Administrative Service, which handled all secretarial matters, such as personnel, accounting, etc.; also the reorganization of local life, which included relief, bringing back the refugees, reorganizing public services and public health, coördination of the work of private relief societies, and the appraisal of war damages, including the payment of advances on these damages.

(2) A Technical Service, which included the providing of temporary shelters, barracks, and building-materials; the repairing of local roads, water-supply, sewage, gas, and improvement in the lay-out of the town; the preparing for permanent reconstruction, including the improvement of town plans, sanitation, etc.; and also putting the soil back into condition for use

by filling up the trenches and shell-holes and by the construction of farm-buildings.

(3) An Agricultural Service, called the Office de Reconstitution Agricole, which made advances to returning farmers, of cattle, implements, seeds, and fertilizer, and sometimes of money.

(4) The Industrial Service, called the Office de Reconstitution Industrielle, which bought raw materials, tools, machinery, and other things needed in starting up industrial plants in the liberated regions and which in turn ceded them against eventual war indemnities to the manufacturers of the region.

The Administrative Service took over the Bureau of Reconstitution from the Ministry of the Interior. The Technical Service took over the Reconstruction Bureau that had been in operation in the Ministry of Public Works. The Agricultural Service took its functions from the Ministry of Agriculture. The Industrial Service took its functions from the Ministry of Commerce. Budget allowances in these four other ministries were turned over to the Ministry of Liberated Regions.

With the signing of the armistice and the opening up on a vast scale of the work in the devastated regions, three important changes of organization took place: First, the appointment of M<sup>onsieur</sup> Maucière as Commissioner-General to work in the Ministry of Liberated Regions in direct collaboration with the minister; second, the decree of November 26, 1918, which changed the Ministry of Armament into a Ministry of Industrial Reconstitution; and third, the creation of an interministerial commission presided over by M. Louis Revault, which was charged with coördinating the relationship and projects of the various interested ministries with regard to all urgency work in the liberated regions.

As for the first of these changes, the Administrative Service described above continues to be directly under the minister, M<sup>onsieur</sup> Lebrun, at Paris. But the other services are now directly under the commissioner-general, who acts as a general manager for the ministry. All of the Industrial Service has been taken over by the Ministry of Industrial Reconstitution; and the other services under the commissioner-general are regrouped as follows:

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(1) Agricultural Service, called the Office de Reconstitution Agricole, under the direction of Monsieur Le Seigneur.

(2) A Service of Urgency Work, called the Service des Travaux de Première Urgence, under Monsieur Sillard and Monsieur Despagnat.

(3) A Labor Service, under Lieutenant-Colonel Charles.

(4) A Service of Permanent Reconstruction, under Colonel Suquet. (With the resignation of Colonel Suquet on July 1, 1919, this service was divided into two parts—Urban Reconstruction, under Monsieur Chifflet, and Rural Reconstruction, under Monsieur Maitrot.

(5) A Service of Transportation, under Lieutenant-Colonel Girard.

(6) A Service of Materials, under Monsieur Porché.

(7) A Real Estate Service.

The general administrative services under the comptroller-general, Monsieur Chocarne, cover a wide range. He is indirectly responsible for the army of people working for the

ministry (over 800,000 in all) ; but he is particularly interested in the reestablishment of normal local life in the liberated regions; seeing that local government is reestablished and that there are police and health services throughout the devastated regions as soon as the population returns; officially opening up the destroyed villages for the return of the refugees just as soon as they can be taken care of; and helping the relief societies and various local relief committees to work effectively without treading on one another's toes. At the end of June, 1919, out of 3,400 communes in the liberated regions already 2,620 have reestablished a local administration.

For example, in the department of the Somme, up to April 1, 1919, 204 communes were functioning. In 187 of these the pre-war mayor had already come back; in 26 more the assistant-mayor was acting as mayor; and in 41 more a municipal counselor was acting as mayor. One hundred and two local police had come back; 107 schools had already been opened and many school-teachers were back for whom no place in which to teach was available.

On July 11, there was a congress of mayors



of the department of the Somme, at which 350 mayors were present. They reported that out of 280,000 inhabitants in their communes before the war, already 180,500 had come back. They particularly insisted that the Government should give priority in every way in all of its services to the devastated regions.

One of the most important things that the administrative service of the Ministry of Liberated Regions has to look out for is the health of returning refugees. The Germans have destroyed or filled up most of the wells. A man told me that he was digging in a field in the devastated regions and, to his surprise, came across a cement pipe. He followed it up and found that one end of it emptied into a community well, down below the water-level; the other end opened into a large sewage vault, so that as soon as the liquid in the vault rose to a certain level it would automatically flow directly into the well. This diabolical contrivance would never have been discovered except by accident. An advisory health commission of leading French sanitarians meets every two weeks at the Ministry of Liberated Regions to consider the health problems in the

devastated towns. Their recommendations are put into effect by the Service of Urgency Work. This service has a sanitary inspector and a public-health nurse in each department who are making constant inspection trips. In addition it has a corps of nurses in the Nord who are looking after the health of the school-children.

Until after the armistice returning refugees were obliged to have their passes signed both by the mayor or the *préfet* of their home locality and by that of the place where they were staying as refugees. But since that time one after another the devastated towns have been opened up and the refugees have flocked back as fast as they could find a place in which to live. Refugees are brought back free to their homes and they may bring free from 150 to 165 pounds of baggage with them for each member of the family; they also are allowed to bring free by freight 10 tons of household goods. Up to June 1, 1919, over 3,000,000 people had located in the liberated regions out of a total of nearly 5,000,000 before the war. There were still between 1,350,000 and 1,500,000 refugees in the interior of France, 80 to 85 per cent. of

whom were ready to return if only they could be assured of a place to live and a means of sustaining themselves in the devastated regions; but as the homes of over 2,000,000 people have been destroyed and as there is very little means of earning a livelihood in the liberated regions, except by cultivating the farms where the ground has been put back into shape for use, the majority of the refugees prefer to wait a little longer in the interior.

A great deal of relief work has been necessary, as is shown by the fact that the Government has already spent over 200,000,000 francs for this purpose, in addition to the enormous sums spent by private relief organizations.

The Administrative Service started on July 21, 1919, the publication of a weekly official "Bulletin des Regions Libérées." All government acts affecting the regions and official answers to questions make it a full and most useful paper.

The appraisal and payment of war damages is destined to be an enormous undertaking. During the first six months of 1919 the Government assigned credits to the *préfets* totaling 753,500,000 francs to meet the demands

for advances against these damages. Monsieur Bluzet, the director of this service, told me that up to July 1, 1919, the Government had advanced over 500,000,000 francs on this account. Already several million applications have been filed for indemnities of one sort or another; for reconstruction of buildings, for the reestablishment of agriculture, industry, commerce, or a profession, for furniture, tools, personal effects, stocks and bonds, and even for goods stolen or fines imposed by the Germans.

With the passage of the war-indemnity bill on April 17, 1919, steps were immediately taken to organize the cantonal commissions, which would appraise and assess all war damages. Nearly 650 of these commissions have been created; 400 of them are officially opening for work on dates varying from July 1 to August 1. The larger cities have a number of commissions; in Rheims, for instance, there are already eight commissions, with the prospect of more. According to the law, advances are to be made as the work proceeds, but if the total building costs more than the amount allowed by the commission, the balance is paid

by the owner. All kinds of damages are passed upon by these commissions, even those that interest primarily other ministries.

The Agricultural Service is in close touch with the Ministry of Agriculture. During 1917, after the German retreat, the Ministry of Agriculture, with its tractor service, plowed more than 80,000 acres of the released land. The French Army plowed about 12,000 acres, while the British Army plowed about 50,000. At that time the French Government owned about 800 tractors and had on order over 1,500 more. Some of these were lost with the German advance in the spring of 1918, but in the spring of 1919 there were over 1,500 available.

During the German retreat in the summer and autumn of 1918, wheat was cut on 180,000 acres of released land. In this work nearly 17,000 men, chiefly soldiers, were employed. Most of this work was done by the Ministry of Agriculture. Meanwhile the Agricultural Service of the Ministry of Liberated Regions is using its credit of 300,000,000 francs and its revolving fund of 100,000,000 francs, to buy materials and to make advances to the returning farmers. An extra credit of 100,000,000

francs was voted to it on June 30, 1919. By last April 32,000 horses had actually been delivered in the devastated regions; 52,000 have been bought from the American Army, 60 per cent. of which have been sent to the devastated regions. Many thousands more are coming from the French Army. Up to June 20, 1919, 61,845 horses and mules had been delivered and 56,800 were on the way. Also 38,650 head of cattle and sheep were delivered or on the way. To bring farming to where it was, 167,000 tons of seed, 1,000,000 tons of seed potatoes, 212,000 tons of fertilizer are needed; 9,864 tons of fertilizer had been delivered by July 1, 1919. Up to July 1, 1919, 104,500,000 francs had been spent for animals, implements, seed, and fertilizer for the devastated regions. These objects are ceded to the refugees by means of local societies, called Sociétés Tiers Mandataires, organized by the Government. The societies are receiving advances from the Agricultural Service of the ministry, from 200,000 to 800,000 francs each, depending on the area they cover.

Meanwhile the Government is making advances to farmers, of 400 francs per acre, to

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help them put their land under cultivation. Of this 240 francs is in the form of cattle, implements, or materials, and the other 160 francs in cash. They have found that if they give a larger proportion of cash the farmer does not put it back into his land, and therefore land is not put back under cultivation as fast as it should be. On the other hand, they have found that with prices as they are to-day it costs nearer 1,200 francs per acre to reëstablish a farm on a good productive basis. Farm animals are very difficult to get; and the farmer is in no hurry to stock up, because he hopes prices will come down and that later he will get more for his money.

There is an interesting side-light on the war damages which many canny farmers have discovered: If the commission that awards damages decides that a man has lost 100,000 francs (which at present prices means 300,000 francs) and then if prices fall later so that it will cost only 150,000 francs to replace his losses, the proprietor has not the right to put the difference in his pocket; but, on the other hand, he can put it into a better type of machine or a higher grade of cattle.

To provide fodder for farm animals, the Government has created depots in a number of farm centers where the fodder necessary for a district is accumulated, and once a month the farmers come and get their ration of fodder for a month at a time.

During the summer and autumn of 1917 the Agricultural Service founded in the Somme, the Aisne, the Oise, and the Pas-de-Calais, over 120 agricultural coöperative societies in as many villages. These usually included most of the farmers in a village; all told, they had nearly 100,000 acres of land under cultivation. Then came the German advance in the spring of 1918, and all of them were wiped out. Since the armistice the Government has been trying to reorganize these coöperative societies and start new ones, but, strange to say, with comparatively little success. On the other hand, agricultural syndicates are being formed everywhere. The difference between the coöperative societies and the syndicates is that in the coöperative society the members pool their land, cultivating it in common, and dividing up the profits or losses pro rata. In the syndicate, on the other hand, each man cultivates his



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own land and makes what profit he can from it; but the members of the syndicate treat for the purchase of animals, tractors, implements, seed, and fertilizer in common.

The Agricultural Service is doing a particularly valuable work in repairing great quantities of broken machines and implements which the Germans have left in the liberated regions. Nearly 6,000 machines had been repaired up to July 4, 1919. . In each department the Government has one or more large repair shops and assembling plants, where all new machines are sent in to be mounted, as well as old machines to be repaired. In addition the Government is encouraging private enterprise along the same line. In the Somme, for example, there are already six or seven private repair shops. Up to July 4, 1919, about 27,000 machines had been brought back from Germany and distributed in the North. Meanwhile the Agricultural Service has ordered about 430,000 implements and machines, of which about 125,000 had been delivered by July 4.

The Government batteries of tractors are owned and operated by the Ministry of Agriculture, but the Agricultural Service of the

Ministry of Liberated Regions determines where they are most needed. Preference is given to agricultural syndicates or coöperative societies. These pay 87 francs an acre for plowing, which is charged up against the eventual war indemnity.

Many farmers and farming societies are buying tractors. Eight hundred and eighty have been obtained through the Government. One hundred and twenty have been bought in the department of the Somme alone. The owner pays only half, the balance being charged up against the war indemnity. The price of gasoline is about 4 fr. 50 a gallon.

In the Somme about 500,000 acres of land have been seriously affected by the war. This year fully 125,000 acres are being put back under cultivation, which is about half of the area that is cleared up, ready for use. The rest can't be put back into use until proper shelters can be provided for the farmers.

In the whole department of the Somme there have been only two serious accidents so far from tractors or plows striking unexploded shells, although some farmers have turned up as many as twenty shells a day. Since Octo-

ber, only four people have been killed in the Somme by explosions; most of the accidents have been from hand-grenades.

The Forestry Service of the Ministry of Agriculture works in direct collaboration with the Agricultural Service of the Ministry of Liberated Regions. It is starting tree-nurseries in a number of places on the edge of the devastated regions. Large numbers of seedlings are coming from America. In the Somme alone it is planning to forestate about 80,000 acres, for the most part land too churned up to be useful for agriculture.

In the northern departments the problem of finding wood for reconstruction is a difficult one. There are comparatively few forests, anyway, and in the best of these the trees are so full of shell splinters that they cannot be sawed up for lumber. Most of the wood will have to come from outside.

The Service of Urgency Work (*Service des Travaux de Première Urgence*) was organized by Monsieur Mauclère when he became commissioner-general. It was felt that far and away the most important thing in the

devastated regions was to make it possible for the farmers to return home and to start cultivating their land again. It was felt to be vitally important for France as a whole that as large crops as possible should be raised during 1919. It was to concentrate on this idea that the Service of Urgency Work was created. The main organization of this service and the size and distribution of its personnel was outlined in the chapter on Public Relief.

Theoretically it does only work that is needed immediately, emergency work. But it does act also as a contractor for carrying out the projects determined by the architectural and engineering services, even where these run into fairly permanent building or public works repairs and the construction of semi-permanent huts.

The whole work is highly organized on lines which combine the best features of the organization of a big contracting company on the one hand, and the Army Engineering Corps on the other. The director of the work in each department is virtually autonomous, and he in turn divides his department into several sectors

according to the amount of work to be done; each sector in turn being cut up into a number of divisions.

The great effort of the Service of Urgency Work is concentrated on clearing the fields of unexploded shells and grenades, removing the barbed wire and filling up the trenches and shell-holes. Almost all of this work, especially the dangerous part of it, is being done by 180,000 German prisoners working under French guards.

The German prisoners work directly under the French Army and they are paid 0 fr. 40 a day, plus their food and lodging. The 82,000 French civilians are almost all of them working for French contractors who have been awarded clean-up jobs as the lowest bidders in open competitions. The French civilian employees in the Somme, for example, are paid from 1 fr. 20 to 1 fr. 60 an hour, everything included; in the Pas-de-Calais the men are paid 1 fr. a cubic meter (a little more than a cubic yard) for filling trenches and shell-holes; men make from 8 frs. to 18 frs. a day, according to the nature of the soil. Colonial troops are paid 6 frs. a day and it costs 4 frs. a day to

feed them, lodge them, and look after them, or a total of 10 frs. a day. Where German prisoners are loaned to civilians to work directly for them, the civilians are charged 7 fr. 90 a day per prisoner, all of which is charged against their eventual indemnity. In a contract in the Somme in June, the contractor was to receive from the State 1 fr. 75 a cubic meter for filling trenches and shell-holes where he did not have to bring his material more than fifty yards, and 3 frs. a cubic meter where he had to bring it more than fifty yards. For clearing away barbed wire he was to be paid 0 fr. 20 for ten square feet, his work to include depositing the barbed wire along the edge of the nearest roadway. This cleaning-up work will be virtually finished by autumn as far as the State is concerned, because the farmers can clear up their own ground during the winter, and do it better, and at a lower price than the State is now paying.

The Service of Urgency Work is encouraging the farmers and others to group themselves in syndicates or coöperative societies to do their own clearing-up work, and it allows them the same current rate that it allows to contractors.

The town of Villers-Carbonnel, in the Somme, is probably the first town to organize a clearing-up coöperative society. In the meantime the reconstruction coöperative societies are devoting their energies to this while waiting to start reconstruction.

The unexploded shells and hand-grenades all through the devastated regions present a most serious problem. The Service of Urgency Work, in collaboration with the Army Engineering Corps, has circulated detailed instructions for the disposing of this material. In a circular of April 19, 1919, instructions were given that all gas-shells should be buried a least seven feet deep and as far as possible from houses, wells, or brooks. Elaborate instructions are given also for the explosion of other shells and grenades. Most of the accidents that have occurred in the devastated regions came from carelessness and curiosity on the part of civilians. Full warnings are posted everywhere to caution people against taking risks.

The next big problem of the Service of Urgency Work is sheltering the returning population. In the Somme, for example, about a

thousand French workmen are making rough repairs to the buildings that can most easily be made habitable. A number of other repair jobs have been given out to local contractors; in fact, every individual who will repair his own house or who can build a hut for himself is in every way encouraged to do so. These rough repairs are made gratuitously by the Government on the principle that with so much urgency work to do no one can afford the time to do permanent repairing or reconstruction. After his trip to the liberated regions in July, 1919, Monsieur Clemenceau said that the most urgent matter was to provide adequate shelter there, before winter, for 200,000 persons.

The service also puts up barracks and portable houses that have been furnished to it by the Service of Permanent Reconstruction. About 5,000 of these have already been mounted. In addition, on July 10, 1919, the Service of Urgency Work called for bids on the construction of one hundred semi-permanent huts at St. Quentin, from materials taken from the ruins. On July 18 it asked for another group to be erected near Château-Thierry. In this connection it is interesting to



recall that the French Government decided on December 12, 1918, that all the materials that come out of the ruins belong to the Government and the Government only.

The great problem still before the Service of Urgency Work is clearing away the ruins of the destroyed buildings. It was estimated that this alone is going to cost over 2,000,000,000 francs. So far the service itself does no systematic clearing, but on the request of the mayor it has often loaned some of its German prisoners or other workmen to individuals where they had to have a site cleared away in order to reestablish themselves. In a few places—as at Béthune, Arras, Lens, Ham, Rheims, etc.—contracts have already been let for the clearing away of ruins, and contracts are being let at Lille, St. Quentin, Albert, Soissons, and Verdun. In fact, the work at Béthune is already well advanced. At Arras the contractors have tried doing the work with an English steam shovel, but so far contractors have preferred to do all the work by hand on account of the complicated mixture of materials in the cellar-holes. A commission goes over the ruins before they are cleared away and

decides just what standing walls should be kept. If it were not for this, it would be easy to blow up all of the standing walls and then dig out everything at once with mechanical appliances.

There is another complication, however, and that is the unexploded ammunition that one often finds in the ruins. In Lens a man a day has been killed in the clearing-up process, in most cases, however, through carelessness.

The most interesting example of the clearing away of the ruins is the recent case at Rheims: A typical portion of the city, about one tenth of its area, was let out to bid to contractors from anywhere in France. About forty sent in estimates to the Service of Urgency Work, stating how much they demanded over or under the unit price schedule fixed by the Government. The Government said that it considered the general run of material in the ruins to be worth 10 francs a cubic meter carted away and dumped where designated by the city. Then it named a number of different kinds of material that could be sorted out from the mass and said that for each cubic meter of stone sorted out it considered 45 francs a fair

price; for each thousand bricks with the plaster scraped off, 80 francs; for steel and iron, 70 francs a ton; and for lead or zinc 400 to 500 francs a ton. The contract was let to the lowest bidder, who offered to do the work for 27 per cent. less than the government estimate. The contract was let on April 17, 1919, and he has a year in which to do the work. Meanwhile the government engineers are watching the work very closely to determine on what basis they should let similar contracts generally in other cities in the devastated regions.

A list of towns has been prepared for clearing up in the order of their relative urgency, the manufacturing towns being placed first on the list.

Another important job of the Service of Urgency Work is the repairing or constructing of new narrow-gage railways. The service has made a thorough survey of the circulation of trucks and the need of materials in the devastated regions, and it is preparing to lay down narrow-gage railways along all lines of heavy traffic, as the railways can be operated more cheaply than motor-trucks.

The Service of Urgency Work is also

charged with the sanitary work in the devastated regions. If the medical and sanitary inspector attached to the Service of Permanent Reconstruction, or to the Administrative Service of the Ministry, says that a well should be cleaned out, or that a cistern should be emptied, or that chloride of lime should be spread about, or that a swamp should be filled up to get rid of mosquitos, it is the Service of Urgency Work that has to carry out the order. Whenever possible the work is let out by contract; otherwise the service does it directly with its own labor. Already hundreds of wells have been put back into use. Privy vaults are usually cleaned out by private contractors.

There is very little more to be said about the Labor Service than has been said. The recruiting and control of labor is a great problem in itself. It will become an even more difficult problem with the return of the German prisoners to Germany, although more and more the work will be done by private initiative and private contracts, and the State will be rid of the necessity of finding the required labor. Each local service and each contractor, coöperative society, or individual that needs

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labor sends in its demand through the Service of Urgency Work.

The Transportation Service of the Ministry of Liberated Regions is a most essential part of the organization. Without it nothing could function. In June, 1919, the minister reported to the Chamber of Deputies that he was expending 9,800,000 francs a month on his transportation service. However, this service did a great deal of work in the devastated regions for other ministries. On June 1, 1919, there were 8,190 vehicles of all sorts working for the ministry. There were 6,633 chauffeurs and mechanics, 324 foremen, and 165 men in charge of the different services. During the month of May, 1919, they hauled nearly 9,000,000 ton miles. The Transportation Service is trying to replace its heaviest traffic routes by narrow-gage railways to save time and expense. These railways are to be built by the Service of Urgency Work. There were a great many of these narrow-gage railways in the devastated regions before the war and the German Army and also the Allied armies built great systems of them for war purposes. Many of these still exist in a more or less dam-

aged condition, but in order to serve the new needs many of them will have to be changed to new routes.

The Service of Permanent Reconstruction is the important service of the future. So far it has done little more than make plans, control repairs, order the construction of barracks and portable houses, found reconstruction coöperative societies, and lay in stocks of material for the future. This last-named duty has recently been taken away from it and organized into a new service called the Service of Materials.

However, it is this service that is the logical successor of the technical service of reconstruction that used to be in the Ministry of the Interior and later in the Ministry of Public Works, which conducted all of the government repair work in the Somme, the Aisne, and the Oise in 1917. That service had about a thousand German prisoners and a thousand civilians working under French contractors during the better part of that year.

To-day the Service of Permanent Reconstruction is responsible for all permanent rebuilding. Its duty is to coördinate all the different efforts, to direct them, to watch the ap-

plication of the various laws affecting rebuilding and the awarding of war damages. It has three main sections. The first is in close touch with the Service of Urgency Work, furnishing it with portable houses, furniture, hardware, windows, doors, and trusses. The second section has to do with the eventual reconstruction of town and cities; it sees to the preparing of proper improved plans for the towns, and in general controls building and the use of advances made against the eventual war indemnities; it encourages the creation of reconstruction coöperative societies. A third section does the same thing for rural communities and villages that the preceding section does for urban communities.

The Permanent Reconstruction Service has its own representative in each department with a number of local representatives scattered throughout the department.

During 1917 the predecessor of the service made contracts for the construction of about 15,000 portable houses with two or three rooms and a shed, and also for several thousand farm-buildings. The houses cost from 3,700 to 5,000 francs apiece; the farm-buildings cost

from 1,000 to 4,500 francs apiece. These buildings were ceded to the returning refugees at one half of what they cost the Government, with the understanding that even this half could be charged against the applicant's eventual war indemnity. If he preferred, he could lease a house at amounts varying from 88 to 148 francs a year, and where he could not even afford that, the Government would pay the rent. The farm-buildings were sold only, with the expectation that they would be made permanent by the filling in of the spaces between the uprights of the frame with masonry or other durable material.

Between 3,000 and 4,000 portable houses had been set up in the Somme, the Aisne, and the Oise before the German advance in the spring of 1918. When the Germans were swept back in the late summer of 1918 it was found that almost all of these buildings had been destroyed.

Now 75,000 portable buildings are on order. Already about 10,000 of them have been sent to the devastated regions. About 4,500 of them have been set up to date by the Service of Urgency Work. They cost a little more



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now because of the higher price of materials, the range for the houses being from 4,400 francs for two rooms and a shed, to 7,400 francs for four rooms and a shed.

On March 17, 1918, the Reconstruction Service of the ministry asked for bids on various types of furniture, including wardrobes, tables, chairs, cupboards, wooden beds and iron beds—75,000 articles in all. These were allotted to refugee applicants on a basis of 245 francs for the wardrobe, 80 francs for the cupboard, 58 francs for a table, 11 francs for a chair, and 51 to 60 francs for a bed—all to be charged against the eventual war indemnity. Since the armistice these orders have been greatly increased and government contracts for war materials were transformed into contracts for refugee furniture, doors, windows, hardware, etc.

On December 20, 1918, bids were asked for 12,000 combination school tables and benches. On April 10, 1919, bids were asked on 50,000 iron beds, each four feet wide. On July 23, 1918, the Government asked for bids on 20,400 exterior doors, 42,000 interior doors, 40,200 windows, and 25,000 shutters. Since the ar-

mistice these figures have been increased by orders given to the holders of war contracts, so that now 110,000 standardized windows and 90,000 standardized doors are on order. A little later orders were placed for a number of wooden trusses of standardized sizes; also, for a number of managers. On December 20, 1918, bids were asked on several million articles of hardware of all sorts and kinds. There were over 3,200,000 hinges in this order. On the same date bids were asked on several hundred thousand faucets and other plumbing-supplies.

The Service of Permanent Reconstruction is making experiments in the economizing of materials and construction in rebuilding. It has erected an experimental building of *pisé*, similar to adobe, in Paris, to see what recommendations should be made with regard to the use of the material. As a result of this experience an interesting pamphlet has been published for the use of builders in the devastated regions.

The service also has been studying model house and farm-building plans for the devastated regions. This has resulted in the pub-

lication, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, of two volumes entitled "Model Types of Agricultural Buildings."

In general there is very little permanent rebuilding going on as yet, and the Government is not encouraging it, because all of the labor, transportation, and materials available are not even enough to supply the urgency demands for getting the fields back under cultivation, sheltering the returning refugees, and taking care of the sanitation of the communities. Occasional individuals, or groups of individuals, have gone ahead on their own initiative with permanent rebuilding, especially some of the larger manufacturers who could proceed without having to wait for their war indemnities. But in almost every case, urgency work has been given priority over permanent reconstruction.

In preparing for reconstruction on a big scale the great need is for a central service in the Ministry of Liberated Regions, which can help contractors get started in the devastated regions, pay their labor until they begin to receive payment on their contracts, and help lodge and feed their labor in the devastated re-

gions; and which can also provide them with the machinery, tools, and materials needed for wholesale reconstruction. Such a project was adopted by the Chamber of Deputies on May 23, 1919, which carried with it a credit of 800,000,000 francs, but it has not yet been voted on by the Senate. Until something of this sort is put into effect large-scale reconstruction will be most difficult.

The Service of Permanent Reconstruction actively encourages the creation of reconstruction coöperative societies, because experience has shown that through them the returning refugees can be much more easily dealt with and that considerable time and money can be saved both by the State and individuals if the latter can only be persuaded to reconstruct co-operatively instead of separately. To help in the founding of these societies the Service of Permanent Reconstruction has issued a model constitution and by-laws for societies of this sort and also a number of suggestions for their formation and operation. It gives them books to keep their accounts in, an account-book for each member, and from time to time sends an inspector around to verify them. Four of

these were formed in 1916 in the department of the Marne, in villages destroyed in 1914. They have already rebuilt most of their villages and their experience has been of the greatest value in the present campaign.

Replanning the devastated towns is a particularly important part of the work of the Service of Permanent Reconstruction. The Government started to take hold of this problem nearly three years ago, when in a circular letter sent to the *préfets* of the invaded departments on September 27, 1916, the Minister of the Interior instructed them to study how they could improve the plans of their towns. He told them that there were three outstanding things that should be considered: (1) circulation in the streets; (2) sanitation and public health; (3) the esthetic character of the town. This circular was particularly insistent that they should have plans made at once for improved street alignment and grading; if this could be done, it would allow the community to take advantage of a law of April 5, 1884, which says that when buildings are demolished or when they have fallen in ruins,

they must conform to the new alignment and grade when rebuilt, and the town has to pay only for the land.

In a circular of December 11, 1916, the Minister of the Interior asked the *préfets* to start plans even for communities that were still in the hands of the enemy. In a circular of November 12, 1917, he again urged them to make these plans and to report to him by December 31, 1917, what they had done. Unfortunately the reports brought almost no results.

Then came the famous town-planning law of March 14, 1919, which ordered that plans should be made for improving all devastated areas, and the communes were given three months in which to get started. On March 15, 1919, the Minister of Liberated Regions sent a circular to the *préfets* of the liberated departments in which he ordered that nothing except temporary shelters be built without the consent of the departmental town-planning commission, until improved town plans had been made and put into effect. The services of the Bureau of Roads and Highways of the Ministry of Public Works were offered for making

surveyors' maps of the towns, because the maps of most of the towns had been destroyed by the Germans.

Each commune was asked to consider carefully whether or not it might be desirable to remove the whole town or some part of the town to a new site. In any case, however, it was ordered to make immediately street-alignment and grading plans, and a rough general plan for the improvement, embellishment, and extension of the whole commune. Furthermore, it was directed to establish a program of work in the order of relative urgency of the various things to be done.

The plans are to be paid for by the State, but each commune is free to choose its own experts. The Departmental Town-Planning Commission is ready to give advice at any time. In the department of the Nord this commission, which is composed of seventy members, held its first meeting on June 4, 1919. The other departments are rapidly getting under way.

To help the communes to understand a little better what is being attempted, the Permanent Reconstruction Service has issued two pam-

phlets describing in detail the problems to be considered. One pamphlet deals with urban communities, the other with rural communities. Special stress is laid on sanitation.

The *préfets* each have lists of accredited town-planning experts which they give to the communes on request.

While the city of Lille was still in the hands of the Germans it began to study the eventual improvement of its plan, and collected much necessary preliminary data. Its plans are now nearly matured. One of their chief features is the tearing down of the walls all around the town. This will give the city six hundred acres of parks in addition to the sites for many houses for working-men.

Plans for Revigny and Clermont-en-Argonne, in the Meuse, were made back in 1916. A plan for Tracy-le-Val, in the Oise, and studies for the plans of Albert and Arras were made by La Renaissance des Cités in 1917.

For Rheims, since the beginning of the war, architects, engineers, and landscape architects have been making suggestions as to how it could be improved. Since the armistice the city has brought together and put on exhibi-



tion nineteen of these projects. It has called in some of the best experts in the country to tell it what are the good and the bad features in each plan; the city has woven all of these suggestions together and presented the results to the citizens for their approval. At the end of June, 1919, the city adopted the plans and notified property-owners that they must not rebuild except in conformity with them; the plans show a big open garden behind the cathedral, the widening out of the main thoroughfares, and the cutting through of several new cross-thoroughfares to handle modern traffic; they also show the creation of several big new industrial districts and the eventual creation of at least five garden suburbs for working-men.

Under the auspices of *La Renaissance des Cités* the city of Chauny, the principal glass-manufacturing city of the devastated regions, gave twenty-five thousand francs in prizes and opened an inter-allied competition for an improved town plan. A number of interesting suggestions were presented for improving Chauny by preserving the charm of the old town and at the same time adapting it to mod-



**THE WHOLE TOWN OF DIXMUDE IN APRIL, 1919**



*French Official Photo.*

**HOUSE AT GRUNY REPAIRED BY FRIENDS**



**A COLONY ERECTED BY THE ENGLISH FRIENDS**



**FRIENDS PUTTING UP ONE OF THEIR OWN PORTABLE HUTS**

ern industrial needs. The winning plan, by Monsieur Rey, was especially good.

Armentières and Montdidier have virtually completed their plans; other plans are well under way for Valenciennes, Arras, Albert, St. Quentin, Roye, Coucy-le-Château, Vailly, Compiègne, Vienne-le-Château, Verdun, Nancy, Pont-à-Mousson, Nomeny, and Belfort. Several hundred other towns and villages have either started their plans or are expecting to do so at once. The greatest difficulty with this work lies in persuading the villages that their lay-outs could be improved and that they should employ a real expert to advise them. Now that the great competition is open for improving the lay-out of Paris and its environs, town-planning is sure to receive a special impetus.

Little permanent reconstruction has been done so far, as the Government is discouraging it for the time being. Except for what was done in 1919, almost all of it is in towns that were destroyed in 1914. Gerbéviller, in the Meurthe-et-Moselle, which was wilfully destroyed by the Germans in their first retreat, shows already about forty buildings recon-

structed by private contract; there has been no official control over their construction or design, with the result that they do not augur well for the charm of the town when it is all reconstructed, but they are fairly solidly built and serve their purposes as well as the buildings that were there before.

The farm-town of Vassincourt, near Bar-le-Duc, has fared much better. The proprietors have fallen into the hands of a good architect, who has rebuilt most of the farm groups; all of the charm of the best of the buildings that were there before the war reappears in most of these new buildings, and in addition they have a convenience, efficiency, and economy of plan which most of the former buildings lacked. To give an idea of present-day prices, we find that the rebuilding of a large house and farm buildings costs 75,000 francs; a six-room house alone costs 20,000 francs; a farm barn and two living-rooms costs 24,000 francs.

Sermaize-les-Bains and Pargny, also destroyed in the Battle of the Marne, are already about one quarter rebuilt. Like Gerbéviller, they were rebuilt by private contract, but they were a little more fortunate in their architects.

Much more interesting is the reconstruction that has gone on in the twelve villages west of Vitry-le-François, that were destroyed in the Battle of the Marne. They have grouped themselves together in four coöperative societies with one architect and one contractor for all of the work of each society. Already nearly 150 buildings have been reconstructed in these villages at a cost of about 2,000,000 francs. While the buildings are not so charming as those at Vassincourt, nevertheless most of them are more practical than the buildings they replace, and if all of the destroyed villages could be rebuilt as well, there would be very little need to worry about the future of the region.

However, the crowning example of reconstruction is the work done by two American women; Mrs. Crocker and Miss Daisy Polk, of California, have presented in the little village of Vitrimont, in the Meurthe-et-Moselle, a sample of reconstruction that all should see. I was there in October, 1916, just as fifty French workmen were arriving in the completely destroyed village to rebuild it according to the plan of the departmental architect. Over half of the villagers had returned and

were making out an existence as best they might under the tottering walls of what had been their homes. The manure heaps were still out in front of the houses and everywhere there was litter and sordidness. It was most unpromising, but Miss Polk was full of courage.

In the spring of 1919 I revisited the town. Here were clean, charming houses, gay with their bright painted doors and shutters, with bigger windows, baths, better sanitary arrangements; sewers and electric lights. The manure heaps and broken wagons in front of the houses had been replaced by trees and grass-plots. The whole town had an air of well-being and self-respect that made one hope that the lesson would be taken to heart throughout the length and breadth of the devastated regions. The Americans had gone; the work was done, the proprietors having signed over to their benefactors any indemnity they may eventually get from the Government; but the memory of their passage remains in the name of the principal street "la rue de Californie."

In many cities and towns where the damage was comparatively slight, such as Amiens, we find a good deal of rebuilding actually started,

but most of the refugees prefer to wait until they know just what their war damage from the Government is going to amount to. It is expected, however, that by the spring of 1920 permanent reconstruction will start actively. Meanwhile, in addition to laying in stocks of materials, the Government is spending a great deal of time in each department in establishing unit standard prices for building-construction on which contracts can be based.

In general the Permanent Reconstruction Service is divided into two parts—the urban division in charge of an architect, and the rural division in charge of an agricultural engineer; each has his representative in charge of the work in each department; towns of from six hundred to one thousand people and over are handled by the architect, and the rest by the agricultural engineer. The latter handles from two hundred to four hundred communes in each department, and the former handles from thirty to eighty. Even in rural communities the architect usually handles all public buildings, churches, and chateaux. The architect in collaboration with the agricultural engineer controls the planning of the rural com-



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munities. The engineer encourages the formation of agricultural syndicates; both he and the architect organize reconstruction coöperative societies wherever they can. Both of them are devoting most of their attention just now to making programs and laying out work for the Service of Urgency Work; the architect orders the portable houses that are mounted by the Service of Urgency Work, and the engineer orders the portable farm-buildings.

The question of raw materials is a most important one in temporary as well as in permanent reconstruction. On October 22, 1916, the predecessor of the Permanent Reconstruction Service published a report showing the distribution of quarries, and in general showing where the raw materials could be obtained in or near the devastated regions. It showed, for example, that good building-stone could be found in almost all of the liberated departments, except the Nord and the Somme; there is good brick clay in almost all of the departments, especially in the Nord. The great difficulty, however, is getting the coal needed for burning the brick. There is plenty of good building-sand in all of the departments; ce-

ment can be produced in large quantities in the Pas-de-Calais, the Marne, the Meuse, and the Meurthe-et-Moselle, provided, of course, that the necessary coal is available.

Most of the departments can furnish plenty of lime, which probably will be much used in reconstruction. Tile can be produced in quantity and roofing-slates exist in large quantities in the Ardennes and the Meurthe-et-Moselle, and to a lesser extent in the Nord and the Pas-de-Calais. The Ardennes used to have hundreds of little shops that produced hardware. Glass comes from the Nord, the Aisne, and from Belgium. There is little wood available in the Nord, the Pas-de-Calais, or the Somme. In the eastern departments, however, there are still large quantities available. The chief difficulty with regard to all of these materials will be in getting the tools and machinery needed for extracting and preparing them for use.

The Reconstruction Research and Educational Service of the American Red Cross made maps for each of the liberated departments, showing the location of each quarry, bed, and outcropping of material that might

be used in reconstruction; these maps are now being published by *La Renaissance des Cités*.

The Permanent Reconstruction Service bought building-materials where it could and began to create stocks in various centers in the liberated regions. By the beginning of May, 1919, this service began to assume an importance that made it desirable to create a separate Service of Materials. The particular duty of this service is to make a survey of the conditions in the devastated regions, to see just what is going to be needed in the way of building-materials, and in what quantities. It then looks over the available supply of each material and wherever it finds a material that the market is not providing in sufficient quantities it either lays in a stock from some outside source or it makes arrangements with the Minister of Industrial Reconstitution to increase its extraction and preparation for use. It will cede these materials to the returning refugees either through a citizens' purchasing board like that associated with the Ministry of Industrial Reconstitution, or through a local *Société Tiers Mandataire* similar to those associated with the Agricultural Reconstitution Service.



**AMERICAN RED CROSS TRUCKS UNLOADING RELIEF SUPPLIES  
At the Town Hall in Peronne to be distributed by French  
Red Cross.**



**THE LIVING-QUARTERS OF THE SMITH COLLEGE RELIEF UNIT  
AT GRÉCOURT, SOMME**



**VITRIMONT, MEURTHE-ET-MOSELLE**

The only destroyed village in France that is now completely rebuilt.



**THE TRAVELING STORE OF THE SMITH COLLEGE RELIEF UNIT  
AT CANIZY, SOMME**

On the first of June, 1919, the Service of Materials asked for bids on the following materials: 60,000 tons of hydraulic lime, 40,000 tons of cement, 40,000 tons of ordinary lime, 1,000 tons of plaster of Paris, 20,000,000 bricks, 20,000,000 hollow bricks, 20,000,000 roofing-tiles, all of which would be delivered as soon as possible in the devastated regions.

At the same time many of the liberated departments have been asking for bids on similar materials on their own account.

On December 12, 1918, a law was passed which authorized the State to requisition all current building-materials coming from wholly or partly destroyed buildings in the devastated regions. The State allows the owner the appraised value of the materials, and the owner cannot touch the materials himself unless the State officials allow him to do so.

In letting contracts for clearing up the ruins the State expects the contractor to cull out of the débris all materials that can be reëmployed in building. The Service of Materials stores them against eventual use.

The Service of Materials is in close touch with the liquidation boards of the French,

British, and American armies; already large quantities of materials have been ceded to it on the spot by the French Army. As an example of how this works in practice, the Minister of Liberated Regions has just authorized the temporary reconstruction of the village of Hombieux in the Somme by the use of materials from a French army dump in the neighborhood.

Immense quantities of materials have already been taken over from the British Army and negotiations are concluded with the American Army to take over its supply.

Up until June 20, 1919, few building-materials could be imported into France, but on that date the door was opened and almost everything that goes into building was given unrestricted entrance, except for a control over the quality. Most raw materials are free of customs' duties.

Another feature of the Service of Materials is the work it is doing in experimenting with building materials and construction to see what can be done to save time, money, and transportation. In March, 1919, the Permanent Reconstruction Service published an interesting

report on the results of its experiments in the use of adobe, mud bricks, and other unbaked materials. In former times there used to be a good deal of construction with these materials in eastern and northern France. At St. Quentin and Château-Thierry the Government has recently contracted for the building of several hundred houses of sun-dried mud and débris.

At Noyon, the city council is planning to reconstruct the stores of the town of concrete. Lens had already begun to make large quantities of cinder concrete. In Rheims, several of the big manufacturers are making their own mud bricks for the reconstruction of their factories, even using earth dug up on their own ground; these bricks are costing thirty-five francs a thousand.

The department of the Somme has been building experimental houses of various sorts of débris coming from the ruins, and the results have been very satisfactory.

The Reconstruction Research Service of the American Red Cross and the Service of Materials of the Ministry of Liberated Regions have collaborated in making a number of tests



on agglomerates made of various sorts of materials from the ruins, with different binders, to see what would be most economical and most effective in reconstruction; meanwhile the Office du Bâtiment, which consists of the leading engineers, architects, and contractors of France, is making with the collaboration of the Ministry of Liberated Regions a thorough study of the standardization of building-materials and methods, and has sent a commission of its best men to America to see what of American methods are applicable in the devastated regions, and what American materials and machinery should be brought over.

There are, furthermore, in connection with the Ministry of Commerce a series of technical advisory commissions, several of which are advising the ministry on its importation policy with regard to building-materials and machinery.

For the last six months of 1918, we find that the Minister of Liberated Regions was allowed a budgetary credit for all of his services of 461,000,000 francs. He spent during that time almost 66,000,000 francs; during the previous six months he spent 52,000,000 francs.

For the first six months of 1919 he had a budgetary credit of 2,146,000,000 francs. During January, February, March, and April he spent nearly 282,000,000 francs. During May he spent 198,000,000 francs. The amount is rapidly increasing each month. For July, August, and September, 1919, he has asked for a budgetary credit of 2,106,000,000 francs, of which nearly 1,000,000,000 is for the Service of Urgency Work, and another 1,000,000,000 is for payments on account of war damages.

The North was the greatest industrial center of France. The destruction of the factories has not only stopped life in the liberated regions but has been a most serious blow to the economic life of France as a whole. It is of the utmost importance that the destroyed industries should be put back into operation as soon as possible. The whole reestablishment of the liberated regions is dependent on it. The first active step that was taken to bring back these industries was the creation of an organization of manufacturers in the first year of the war; this group was called L'Association Centrale pour la Reprise de l'Activité Indus-

trielle dans les Régions Envahies. Most of the industrial people whose plants had suffered joined it. It soon became apparent that the chief thing needed was the creation in advance of large stocks of machinery and materials so that these would be ready for use at the end of the war. However, under the French law an association like this cannot trade, and so a purchasing board was created, with a capital of 1,000,000 francs, which was called the *Comptoir Central d'Achats Industriels pour les Régions Envahies*.

Meanwhile the association secured the passage of a law on August 6, 1917, which created a Government service of Industrial Reconstitution attached to the Ministry of Commerce. This service was voted a budgetary credit of 250,000,000 francs and a revolving-fund of 100,000,000 francs. As this Government service was not allowed to buy large quantities of machinery and materials itself, it made use of the private purchasing board that has just been described as its purchasing agent. Its private capital of 1,000,000 francs was considered to be its evidence of responsibility and good faith. The government service pays all

overhead expenses and 5 per cent. interest on the paid-in private capital. The association, the purchasing board and the government service collaborate in working up a program of purchasing. The purchasing board can buy directly for a private individual or it can constitute general stocks for distribution later. The recipient can pay for machinery or materials in cash, or he can have the total charged up against his eventual war indemnity. Until recently the Government has advanced no cash to individual manufacturers for the purchase of machinery or goods, because it wanted to save money by wholesale buying and to prevent the unfortunate effect on the market of the competition of a number of little buyers bidding against one another.

With the creation of the Ministry of Liberated Regions in November, 1917, the Industrial Reconstitution Service was transferred to the new ministry. It remained with this ministry until November 26, 1918, when by decree of the Government the Ministry of Armament was changed into a Ministry of Industrial Reconstitution. Then the whole industrial service was again transferred to the latest minis-

try. Until this last transfer the government service and the purchasing board had effected purchases to the amount of about 65,000,000 francs; in addition it had prepared orders for machinery, tools, and raw materials, especially in connection with the reconstitution of the coal-mines, to the amount of about 200,000,000 francs. Other orders to the extent of about 150,000,000 francs were being prepared for the textile industry, breweries, sugar-mills, etc.

The decree of November 26, 1918, provided for changing over munition plants to peacetime manufacture. The ministry has been voted budgetary credits of over 1,000,000,000 francs to forward this work. Up to July 1, 1919, over 800,000,000 francs had been engaged in buying machinery and goods; virtually all of this was expended through the purchasing board.

The ministry consists of an administrative service, several technical services, a service for the recuperation of material taken into Germany, and a financial service. The liberated regions are divided into seven sectors, with corresponding services in each sector. When a manufacturer wants government help in get-

ting started, he makes his application to the headquarters of the sector, accompanying it with a detailed statement of his losses. This statement is checked up by the government officials and on the basis of it he is allowed a credit against which the Government grants him machinery and goods. The ministry also makes him advances of money with the understanding that it shall be used only for repairing his machinery or buildings and as a working-capital for starting the operation of his plant. The ministry helps him secure trucks and barracks from the army. It secures for him priority of manufacture of the things he needs and a priority of purchase on the things that the army is liquidating.

The ministry, in collaboration with the association, has been trying to create industrial coöperative societies. One society has been formed among the textile manufacturers of Fourmies and another among the sugar-manufacturers at Roye. The principle of these co-operative societies consists in rebuilding and starting up in common one factory after another as fast as labor and machinery are available, and dividing up the profits pro rata

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among the members of the society. Aside from allowing all to get some start immediately, the coöperative plan means a considerable saving to all by permitting an extensive standardization of building-plants, machinery, tools, and stock.

The ministry has issued seven interesting pamphlets; the first two have to deal with the recuperation of machines and stocks stolen by the Germans. This service is actively at work, with agents all through Germany, and already thousands of machines identified by their owners are on their way back to Paris.

The next two pamphlets describe in detail how the manufacturer who has suffered war damage should make out his application for advances of money or goods. The next two tell him how to go to work to get machinery, raw materials, and other goods. The remaining pamphlet advises him how to secure labor for starting up his plant. On this subject the Ministry of Labor is in close touch with the Ministry of Industrial Reconstitution and as soon as a plant is ready to function, even if only in small part, the Ministry of Labor advertises for workers.

Meanwhile the Ministry of Industrial Reconstitution is constantly advertising for bids on the construction or repair of industrial buildings. At Lens the ministry is getting forty-three big pumps to pump out the mines.

Already several hundred manufacturing-plants have started up again more or less completely; a few mines have been reopened and a number of quarries and brick- or lime-kilns have again started in operation.

Since the creation of the Ministry of Liberated Regions in November, 1917, the Ministry of Public Works has confined its operations in the devastated regions to the railroads, canals, and main highways. It has an extensive and well-organized personnel in these regions which has made a remarkable showing since the armistice.

In addition the Bureau of Bridges and Highways has worked in direct collaboration with the Ministry of Liberated Regions in creating and handling stocks of building-materials which are controlled by the latter.

In a report made by the Minister of Public Works to the President of the French Republic, on July 6, 1919, we find that on the Nord



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Railroad there were only fifteen miles of track which had not yet been repaired, less than 1 per cent. of the total destroyed by the Germans. On the mining railroads over half had been repaired. On the Est Railroad only 165 miles remained unrepaired, or about 10 per cent. of what the enemy had destroyed. All but forty-two railway stations had been repaired.

About half of the narrow-gage railways have already been repaired. The work on the bridges and tunnels is proceeding rapidly.

With regard to the canals and waterways, a large number of contracts were let for their repair on December 18, 1918. On July 15, 1919, 19,000 employees were at work. Already nearly 200 miles of canals were back in use, that is about 80 per cent. of the total damage. Three of the canals, however, are completely destroyed and cannot be put back into use until 1920.

Despite the fact that over 60,000 miles of highways were damaged and over 2,000 bridges and tunnels destroyed, 4,000 yards of temporary bridges had been built and 5,000 miles of the worst road had been rebuilt, for

which over 500,000 tons of materials had been used. Contracts have already been let for reconstructing most of the bridges and tunnels, and the work is proceeding rapidly.

Many of the most beautiful buildings in France were in the regions that were devastated. Of the historic monuments that were under the care of the State, 235 have been damaged; many have been destroyed and are beyond all hope of restoration. Monsieur Lafferre, the Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts, and his able associate, Monsieur Paul Léon, directly in charge of the *monuments historiques*, have been actively at work since the beginning of the war, trying to preserve what they could with the small fund and personnel available.

Paintings and sculptures and objects of an art or historical interest they have removed to a place of safety. Thus the wonderful tapestries in the cathedral at Rheims were saved in the first days of the war. Up to March, 1918, very little of the glass had been damaged at Rheims, but then the Germans started throwing big 16-inch shells into the cathedral with most disastrous effect on the glass. The archi-

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tect of the cathedral, Monsieur Deneux, tried to get help from the French Army to remove the glass to a place of safety. But as he could find no one who could climb up on those dizzy heights without a staging, he went down to Paris and brought up six firemen who, despite the fact they were being fired on constantly by German snipers, succeeded in saving three-quarters of the glass.

All of the best glass was removed from a number of other cathedrals and churches, such as Amiens, Beauvais, St. Denis, Chartres, and from Notre-Dame and the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris.

Everywhere that it was possible the Ministry of Fine Arts protected with a deep covering of sand-bags works of art that could not be removed. The delicate choir stalls at Amiens, the beautiful iron grilles around the Place Stanislas in Nancy, all of the fountains at Versailles, and hundreds of sculptures in Paris, were rendered safe from everything except a big shell or bomb falling directly upon them.

All during the war the Ministry of Fine Arts was sending men here and there in the devastated regions with tarpaulin and tarred

paper, to protect ruins and to prevent their further disintegration by the weather. Meanwhile, as the war proceeded, men were sent out systematically to cover the devastated regions and to list just what had been stolen or destroyed.

On May 16, 1919, M. Louis Marin presented a report to the Chamber of Deputies, asking for an emergency appropriation for the Ministry of Fine Arts of 4,006,400 francs to do the work that had to be done at once to preserve the monuments until such time as they can be restored permanently.

In certain places like Soissons, Laon, St. Quentin, Châlons-sur-Marne, Verdun, Arras, and Cambrai, the Ministry of Fine Arts proceeded at once, without waiting for a budgetary credit, to put a temporary protection over what was left of the buildings. In this way, during the first six months of 1919, 2,575,000 francs had been spent. To remove bags of sand, to put back the glass, etc., Monsieur Marin asked for 1,570,000 francs. In all, for the last six months of 1919 he asked for 11,000,000 francs.

At Rheims Cathedral twenty French work-

men started clearing and sorting out the ruins shortly after the signing of the armistice. By the end of the summer of 1919 the whole cathedral will have been covered by a temporary wooden roof protected with tarred paper. As soon as that is finished, an invisible reinforced concrete roof will be built and the unsightly wooden roof removed. Then the destroyed pillars and buttresses will be rebuilt and the holes in the vaulting filled in.

The plan is not to restore any of the sculpture or carving, but to leave it as it is, as a permanent witness to German barbarity. The glass and the tapestries will be brought back, and within two years services will again be held in this the most historic building of the war.

In a number of places the question is coming up for discussion as to whether this or that monument shall be restored or not. With regard to the medieval castle of Coucy-le-Château, the architects feel that the whole hilltop should be left just as it is. The Belgian Government has already decided to conserve the ruins of the Cloth Hall and the cathedral at Ypres as they are. A committee has already

been formed to erect a great memorial at Fort Douaumont, near Verdun, and to preserve the surrounding region just as it is. In general, however, the experts feel that there is no object in trying to preserve ruins as memorials, because they will crumble and be buried under vegetation so soon. The Minister of Fine Arts has appointed a commission composed of the leading architects of France to decide on all questions affecting the restoration of the *monuments historiques*.

In its various ministries the French Government has already developed a vast organization for aiding the reëstablishment of the liberated regions; but however large this organization may eventually be, it is obvious that most of the results are going to come from private initiative and effort. The Government realizes this and is doing everything possible to encourage it.

## CHAPTER IX

### PRIVATE ORGANIZATION AND EFFORT

The number of associations, societies, committees, and groups of various sorts that have sprung into being to help in one way or another in the reestablishment of the liberated regions, is beyond all count. Many of them one hears about only by accident. But one and all they are bringing their contribution to the work. There are, however, a few outstanding groups that are particularly worthy of study, and foremost among these are the coöperative societies.

We have already described the one hundred and twenty coöperative societies of agriculture which were formed in the Somme, the Aisne, and the Oise, before the German advance in the spring of 1918. Since the Germans were driven back again few new ones have been formed, but instead many hundred agricultural syndicates have sprung up all the way from Belgium to Alsace. People are appreciating more and more the advantages of pur-

chasing in common their implements, machinery, seed, fertilizer, animals, and forage.

Following closely after the agricultural syndicates are the reconstruction coöperative societies. The Government is doing everything it can to encourage their formation and to give them special inducements in the way of labor, transportation, materials, and larger advances. Already several hundred of them have been formed or are forming and there will be many more as soon as permanent reconstruction can get actively under way. It is probable that many of the agricultural syndicates will gradually change over into reconstruction coöperative societies.

Meanwhile, awaiting the time when these groups will have to devote all of their efforts to reconstruction, the idea is being strongly agitated that they should start consumers' coöperative stores. Before the war the liberated regions were full of coöperative stores; a few have already been started up again, usually as branches of a large coöperative store in some central city. Such stores can be of the greatest use at once, in controlling the speculative advance in prices.



Another phase of coöperative activity was launched in the village of Villers-Carbonnel in the Somme. Here all the able-bodied inhabitants of the town presented themselves as a group to the Service of Urgency Work of the Ministry of Liberated Regions, and offered their services coöperatively at the legal rates for clearing up the fields and the ruins of their village.

Still another kind of coöperative society is that formed by several groups of manufacturers, such as the textile coöperative society at Fourmies in the Nord, and that formed by the three sugar-manufacturers at Roye in the Somme, who decided to pool their interests and rebuild only one plant instead of three.

The reconstruction coöperative societies are usually formed one to a village, but in the Meuse we found a coöperative society at St. Mihiel that includes thirty communes, and over five hundred members, and another at Vig-neulles which is even larger. These latter, however, proved unwieldy and have been broken up into a number of smaller societies, each consisting of not over five villages.

These societies all are profiting by the ex-

perience of the four pioneer societies that started rebuilding along the old battle line of the Marne over two and a half years ago. When I visited the villages there, in the end of March, 1919, I found them nearly completely resurrected from their ruins. Large farm barns, well designed and well built, comfortable, substantial houses, permanent out-buildings, all testified to a thoroughness and self-respect that augurs well for the future. I asked Monsieur Oiseau, the Mayor of Glannes, and the treasurer of the reconstruction coöperative society of the villages of Glannes, Huiron, and Courdemanges (all just west of Vitry-le-François) if he thought that conservative French farmers really believed in the advantages of coöperation. He said that they did now, certainly, although at first it had required much persuasion to get them to join in. He said that in their coöperative society they had done about 400,000 francs' worth of work; all of the money except about 6,000 francs was advanced by the State against the eventual war indemnities. Of this, 272,000 francs had been advanced in cash, and the rest in materials and transportation. They had had one archi-

tect and one contractor for all of the thirty farm-buildings and five houses that they had already built. The Government had given them thirty German prisoners, carpenters and masons by trade, at 4 francs a day. The Government has also given them priority on materials and transportation, as well as a larger advance on their war indemnity than they could have had if they had applied singly. The result of this was that with the various inducements granted by the State to the coöperative society they had found that without using any of their own private capital they were actually getting twice as much building done as they could have if they had undertaken it individually.

The great question now is how to keep the newly formed coöperative societies interested and profitably at work until they can actually start rebuilding next spring. Many are using the combined force of the society to speed up their damage awards. Many are studying the improvement of their town in accordance with the new town-planning law. Others are helping in getting quicker results in clearing up the ruins. In the Pas-de-Calais we find sev-

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eral coöperative societies already at work making bricks, against the future. In general they are laying in stocks of materials and tools. Everywhere there are activity and plenty of promise of results as soon as the conditions will permit.

In addition to the coöperative societies and the syndicates, but often composed of the same members, are the numerous Sociétés de Tiers Mandataires which have been created by the Ministry of Liberated Regions throughout the rural districts to purchase and distribute agricultural supplies. A similar group of local societies will soon be formed by the Government to purchase and distribute building-materials; then, in addition, there is the purchasing board which is attached to the Ministry of Industrial Reconstitution. All of these groups consist of citizens organized by private initiative to help the Government.

Each department has its refugee committees, all of which are grouped together in one union for the whole liberated regions. The chief interest has been in urgent relief work and in the publication of a newspaper for each department that would keep the refugees in touch

with their friends and relatives and with what the Government was doing for them.

In each département, also, there is an association of war victims. These associations, again, are grouped together in what is known as the *Fédération des Associations Départementales de Sinistres*. This group had been particularly effective during the war in getting action on the war-damage bills. Now it is using its combined force to speed up the Government work in the devastated regions.

On June 20, 1919, a new federation of war victims was formed, called *La Fédération Française des Sinistres*. The chief object of this federation is to see that the war victims are actually paid their war damages by the State.

A strong national committee has been hard at work since early in the war, helping in the preparation and enactment of the war-damage law. It is called *Comité National d'Action pour la Réparation Intégrale des Dommages causés par la Guerre*.

The chambers of commerce throughout the devastated regions have been most active, doing whatever they could themselves and inducing the Government to do the rest. The local

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Syndicats d'Initiative have been most helpful along the same line.

In the summer of 1916, the Association Générale des Hygiénistes et Techniciens Municipaux, in collaboration with other technical societies, organized a big exhibition in the garden of the Tuileries, in Paris, at which were shown a number of portable houses, types of quick construction, and samples of furniture and utensils, all adapted to the devastated regions.

In the autumn of 1917 La Société des Architectes Diplômés organized a competition for better types of rural buildings, in harmony with the original architectural style of the North. The Government gave 80,000 francs in prizes and allowed two hundred and thirty picked mobilized men twenty days' leave from the trenches to work on this competition. The results were most interesting and valuable, especially as they drew the attention of the public to the desirability of preserving the local architectural character in the reconstruction of the devastated regions, rather than descending to the horrible ginger-bread architecture affected in so many modern French suburbs.

The Musée Social and the Ecole Supérieure

d'Art Public have kept up a constant study of better ways of doing things in the reestablishment of the liberated regions. The Musée Social has published a number of excellent pamphlets on its conclusions. The Ecole Supérieure d'Art Public has for several years offered to the public daily lectures by the best authorities in France on town-planning, housing, sanitation, recreation, landscape architecture, public art, and all the things that make for the betterment of living and working conditions.

The Reconstruction Research and Propaganda Service of the American Red Cross, which I organized in March, 1917, working in close collaboration with the leading French technical societies and authorities, determined during 1918 a number of standards of improved methods in construction, agriculture, town-planning, sanitation, etc., with particular application to the reconstitution problems of the liberated regions. During the autumn and winter of 1917 I made frequent trips to the Somme to follow up the repair work the American Red Cross was doing there under the charge of Mr. Barbey and Mr. Barton. It

was a most valuable experiment, very helpful in our research work. In February, 1919, all of its studies and its library were turned over to La Renaissance des Cités, which has been continuing the work.

La Renaissance des Cités was founded in the second year of the war, as a disinterested and unpaid advisory society, and is composed of leading architects, artists, engineers, sanitarians, bankers, lawyers, humanitarians, and welfare workers. It has issued a number of excellent reports on pertinent subjects. It has made plans for the improvement of Arras, Albert, Tracy-le-Val, Chauny, and Coucy-le-Château. It has a large library on reconstitution subjects and along the same line it has organized several exhibitions and is conducting an extensive campaign of education.

The Rockefeller Tuberculosis Commission, in conjunction with the Tuberculosis Bureau and the Child Welfare Bureau of the American Red Cross, has conducted a general health propaganda throughout France. It is now making an especial effort in the department of the Nord.

At Amiens, the Government and private in-



dividuals opened on July 13, 1919, an exhibition of furniture suitable for use in the Somme. It is expected that their idea will be adopted throughout the liberated regions. At the Foire de Paris, in May, 1919, and at the Jardin d'Acclimatation during August, 1919, there were extensive exhibitions of portable houses and other forms of quick construction suitable to the devastated regions. All of these things have helped greatly in drawing the attention of the public to the needs, and in exchanging ideas among technical people.

In the spring of 1919, Le Comité National de l'Education Physique et Sportive et de l'Hygiène Sociale held a big inter-allied congress to consider social hygiene in its application to the reconstruction of the devastated regions. Their action is largely responsible for the introduction of the excellent sanitation clauses in the recent war-damage law.

The Association Générale des Hygiénistes et Techniciens Municipaux and the Société de Médecine Publique et du Génie Sanitaire, and various other medical and health associations, have by their meetings, publications, and per-

sonal effort added greatly to the general interest in public-health matters.

The Société des Architectes Diplômés par le Gouvernement and the Société Centrale des Architectes, have taken an active part in securing better legislation affecting reconstruction and have striven unceasingly for a high standard of architectural practice. Recently the former society has organized a coöperative society among its members, so that they can pool their effort and avoid duplication in their reconstruction work. The Fédération des Architectes, which includes six other architectural societies, has also created a coöperative society among its members, with the same object in view. Recently a national federation of all the architectural societies has been formed, with the object of securing a complete coördination of effort and program.

In the liberated departments a number of contracting groups have been formed, so that they can unite their efforts on a common program. At the same time the Fédération Nationale du Bâtiment et des Travaux Publics has organized the building-industry through-

out the country and at its national conferences helped greatly in improving building-practice.

Probably the most important step that has been taken toward solving the problem of reconstruction, was the bringing together on November 26, 27, and 28, 1918, of all the national societies technically interested in reconstruction. At this congress were the leading architects, engineers, contractors, and material-supply men of France. They presented a carefully worked out program of action to the French Government, many parts of which have since been put into effect. Perhaps more important still, they organized the Office du Bâtiment et des Travaux Publics composed of the presidents of the various national societies that took part in the congress. This committee has been meeting regularly every week since, to consider technical reconstruction matters, to improve building-methods and materials, and wherever possible to standardize them. With the support of the Minister of Liberated Regions it has sent a strong commission to America to see what practical contribution the

United States can make in materials and methods.

La Société Française des Urbanistes, which is the French town-planning institute, has brought together for common effort the leading town-planning specialists of France. The Inter-allied Town-Planning Conference, which it held in Paris on June 11, 12, and 13, 1919, was of excellent educative value, and did much toward standardizing town-planning practice. Nine members of the organization have formed themselves into a town-planning coöperative society, called the Bureau Technique des Plans de Villes, and having the same object in view as the architectural coöperative societies which we described above.

Of particular interest in connection with town-planning is the creation of a French group, called the Société Aérienne Française which takes photographs to scale from the air of anything that is to be mapped or planned. The use of aërial photographs is fairly revolutionizing town-planning methods of study.

Another interesting group that has recently been formed is known as the Union Centrale

des Victimes des dommages causés par la Guerre, which has been organized for the support and defense of the rights of war victims. The society, which is semi-commercial in character, provides technical advice to war victims along any line that may interest them in connection with the reestablishment of their properties.

In addition there are a number of industrial and commercial groups that are forming all through the liberated regions and in March, 1919, there was held a commercial congress of the liberated regions which was organized by the Fédération des Syndicates Commerciaux du Département du Nord. It asked the Government to grant it the necessary facilities for feeding the returning refugees and otherwise supplying their wants, so that it could replace the relief societies still at work.

The various national agricultural societies, such as the Société des Agriculteurs de France, the Académie d'Agriculture, the Institut National Agronomique, and the Société Nationale pour l'Encouragement à l'Agriculture, have been taking an effective part in the encouragement of farming in the devastated regions.

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The first-named society in particular has distributed a quantity of farm implements in the liberated regions. The Inter-allied Congress of World Agriculture, held by the United States Army Educational Commission at the United States Army University at Beaune, on June 7, 8, 9, and 10, 1919, was of the greatest service in drawing attention to the problems in the devastated regions and in helping to standardize farming-methods.

The labor unions were very strong in the North before the war. In the department of the Nord, for example, there were 299 labor unions and 164 farmers' unions; in the Marne there were 62 labor unions and 258 farmers' unions; in the Meurthe-et-Moselle there were 38 labor unions, and 165 farmers' unions. These groups are getting back on their feet as rapidly as they can and are bound to be a big factor in the reestablishment of economic life.

In the final analysis it is the effort of the individual that is going to count most in the resurrection of the destroyed country. The basis of all is the farmer. We have seen on every hand how determinedly he has set himself to the task. Every member of the family

works, from the youngest child to the old grandfather or grandmother. As soon as it is light enough to work, these people are out in the fields, and they keep continuously at it until after dark; seven days a week they work and they take no time off except to go to the market or the country fair. Little shops are springing up throughout the devastated regions, where farming-machinery or implements can be repaired. Seeds, fertilizer, and farm animals are more and more available. We can rest assured that if the Government continues to do its best in providing the necessary facilities, agriculture will be back on pre-war basis in a surprisingly short time.

The same thing is true of industry and of commerce. The private initiative is there, the will to work is there. In every town there are plenty of people who are ready to carry on the stores if only they can be assured that their goods will arrive. There are plenty of manufacturers that are ready to start up their plants, if only they can count on a regular delivery of their raw materials and of sufficient housing for their employees.

It finally comes down in large measure to a problem of building, and there again we find plenty of will to work, the only difficulty being the limitations of technical experience. The town baker at La Bassée, who was the first man to return, found his home and his bakery flat on the ground, but he set to work and cleared away a space, and although he was no builder, he set up such posts as he could salvage where he wanted the corners of his building, and others around his doors and windows, and then filled in the spaces between with any broken pieces of brick he could find in the ruins, laying them in mud mortar. He put some boards and some corrugated iron across the top of this structure, and had to all intents and purposes a house. He even became so ambitious as to build a chimney and fireplace of brick-bats and mud.

It was in the little farm-village of Esmerly-Hallon that I found the village mason building a most successful emergency house in the garden behind his former home, using the same sort of materials that the baker was using at La Bassée. The walls were plumb and true and



the house really had a good deal of charm. He did the work unaided and in a surprisingly short time.

Less successful but much more picturesque was a little house on the edge of the same town which was thrown together by a gardener who knew nothing whatsoever about building. It was a patchwork of every sort of material imaginable, pulled out of the ruins—such a mixture that it at first seemed a very successful bit of camouflage. However, the house satisfied all of the builder's needs, even through the sleety winter weather, and was really very comfortable inside.

These people are finding a way out and with the least encouragement will be able to settle down for good in their former homes.

## CHAPTER X

### RESULTS AND NEEDS

Facts and figures really signify little. In order to appreciate what devastation means you must see it yourself with your own eyes. And what is more you must see it again and again; otherwise it does not sink in.

If you would appreciate the enormous task that France has before her, if you would appreciate the courage and the splendid spirit with which she has attacked it, if you would appreciate what she has actually done toward the re-establishment of the devastated regions, you must go through them and note the progress she has made from month to month; for things are being done and the regions are coming back.

When I was in Noyon in the summer of 1917, after the Germans had been driven out, the town and its cathedral were almost intact. I passed through again after dark on New Year's Day, 1919: the place was a mass of ghostly ruins; no light anywhere, nobody in the

street except an occasional poilu—a city of the dead. I returned once more on Easter Day: the resurrection had taken place; hundreds of courageous men, women, and children had come back and were living somehow in the ruins of their homes. Easter service was held in the ruins of the cathedral chapel under a cover of rusty corrugated iron. A number of stores were open and doing a lively business and everywhere one could buy post-cards and souvenirs of the ruins. To-day several thousand parsons are back, a number of barracks and portable houses have been erected, and people are actively at work clearing away the ruins and beginning to rebuild.

In many ways Lens is the most impressive sight in the devastated regions. This mining city had over 32,000 habitants before the war, but when I was there in February only about a hundred people had managed to return and find a miserable shelter for themselves in their wrecked homes. To-day, however—that is, in July, 1919—over 2,500 persons are back; a number of barracks have been erected, and a good start has been made toward the clearing away of the ruins.

When I first went back to Rheims, last winter, nearly 2,000 persons had ventured to return, the city water-supply had been put back into operation, but there was no sewage-disposal, no lights, not even a restaurant; to-day there are nearly 40,000 people there; stores, souvenir shops, and restaurants abound on every hand, and the pastry is as good as that one gets in Paris. To be sure, the inhabitants have only just begun to clear away the ruins, but every house that is at all reparable is being made habitable, 800 barracks have been put up, and Rheims is very actively concerned with its new plans for making the future city more practical, more sanitary, and more beautiful than the city of the past.

When we come to the little village of Vitrimont and others of the resurrected villages along the old battle line of the Marne, we can see the devastated regions as they will be ten, fifteen, twenty years from now—in many cases more noble, more beautiful for having been purged by fire.

The saddest towns are those that will never come back. Douaumont, Fleury, Vaux, and eight other communes that stood the brunt of

the attack on Verdun are now merely memories, for on April, 1919, the mayors of these towns wrote to their fellow-townsmen that they must never return. The ruins of the towns are full of dangers and the fields can never be recultivated. There may be a hundred or more of these tragic villages that never can be rebuilt.

There are 250,000 acres of good farming-land that is so badly churned up by shell fire and so cut up with trenches that the experts say to bring it back into use will cost more than it is worth. The State is talking of expropriating this land, with the villages that are irreclaimable, but the owners object; they cannot be persuaded that the earth is sterile. They believe it will work itself back into shape in a comparatively short time, especially if they help the process along by bringing in top-soil themselves. They say, too, that if the State is going to reforest these tracts, there is no reason why they should not do so themselves. The problem will work itself out in time and the regions will come back.

Agriculture in general is coming back and



**LENS**

**From the center of the city of thirty-five thousand people  
before the war.**



**DESERTED MEDIEVAL TOWN OF CONCY-LE-CHÂTEAU, AISNE**



NOYON IN 1919  
View from six thousand feet up.

coming back rapidly. You can see batteries of tractors at work almost anywhere from Belgium to Alsace. Each day sees several hundred acres more brought back under cultivation. Seed, fertilizer, implements, and farm animals are arriving daily in rapidly increasing quantities.

Industry is coming back. Each day the official bulletins of the government list anywhere from five to twenty damaged industrial plants that have again opened their doors and are asking for employees. The number of people in Lille, Amiens, and Rheims who have been out of work is decreasing.

We find a marked tendency among the people to crowd into the industrial centers at the expense of the country districts. Fortunately, this is balanced by the rapidly increasing use of agricultural machinery, which means that the same acreage can be cultivated by a little over half the number of men needed by the old-fashioned method. This means, in turn, that some of the destroyed agricultural villages will never need to be rebuilt and that most of the others will have smaller populations than be-



fore the war. All of this is most fortunate, because it makes the stupendous problem of reconstruction a little easier to solve.

On the other hand, the problem of industrial housing becomes more menacing. There is need to-day of several hundred thousand new houses for industrial workers. The problem is fully as acute in France as it is in the United States, and almost as acute as it is in England, but these other two countries are concentrating on industrial housing, while France will be able to pay very little attention to it until she has taken care of her reconstruction. It is hard for the soldier who has given everything for his country to have to come back to live in worse slums than he left. He deserves a far better lot. But all of the labor, material, and transportation that France has available will be monopolized by the devastated regions for many years to come.

With regard to labor, it is a great question where it is coming from. There were between 500,000 and 600,000 building-trades workmen in France before the war, of which at least 100,000 were killed or are unable to resume their trade. At least 100,000 to 200,000 more

will be needed just for repair and renewal work throughout the rest of France. This leaves only 200,000 or 300,000 men available in the devastated regions. At a safe estimate it will take these men nearly twenty years to reconstruct the essential buildings that have been destroyed. There is no labor available in England, there is none in America, there is none in Belgium, and the French do not wish to call in German workmen if there is any other way possible. All that is left are the few thousands of skilled workmen available in Spain and in Italy and such unskilled workmen as can be brought from the French colonies and from China. The French architects, engineers, and builders realize that their salvation lies in adopting labor-saving methods and machinery wherever it can possibly be done. That is why they have sent an expert commission to America to see what the United States can contribute in ideas or machinery, and why they have organized strong committees to standardize building-material and construction.

Most of the material needed in the construction France can produce herself. But in order to begin producing it in large quantities

she needs certain machinery and tools that can be had quickly only from abroad. Furthermore, she needs certain raw materials quicker and in greater quantities than she can supply them from within her own borders. In particular she needs wood and cement, and, to a lesser extent, glass and iron. She will need much coal for making brick, cement, lime, and steel, and much gasolene to supply transportation motive power.

In industry she needs certain raw materials, such as cotton, wool, leather, and various chemicals.

In agriculture she needs a number of agricultural machines and implements in addition to those she can manufacture herself or get back from Germany. A list of these was given in the chapter on Devastation. Furthermore, she will need fully 200,000 horses; 700,000 cows; 800,000 sheep; 300,000 pigs; all of which will probably have to be supplied from outside. Of the 212,000 tons of fertilizer needed, the potash beds in Alsace will supply a considerable part, but probably 100,000 tons will have to come from abroad.

The material that is coming from the liquida-

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tion of the French, British, and American Army stores is helping wonderfully; but there are many specific things needed immediately, that are not to be found in the salvage stock.

This is why the decree of July 8, 1919, which admits almost all raw and manufactured materials without restriction except for the increased duties, is bound to prove of inestimable value. The door is now opened, and Americans, British, and other foreigners can take a more practical interest in the reconstruction problems of France.

The American and the French merchants need each other. They want to do business together. They should do far more than they have done in the past; but unfortunately there are many little misunderstandings that have seriously retarded the growth of exportation and importation between the two countries. When I visited France in 1916, on the American Industrial Commission, the French manufacturers and chambers of commerce told us frankly that there were several difficulties that would have to be overcome before the French would place orders heavily in America. The

first question was one of credit, because most American exporters demand half down when the order is placed and the balance when the goods leave America; this not only ties up French capital for an unnecessarily long time, but the consignee has no redress in case the goods when they arrive are not according to the specifications. Furthermore, a number of French manufacturers are complaining to-day that they paid half down in America months ago on the promise of immediate delivery, but that the American manufacturer presents one excuse after another for not delivering; the result is that the French capital is tied up so that the Frenchman cannot transfer his orders to England or elsewhere; meanwhile his plant and his workmen lie idle. Another cause of trouble lies in the fact that the American exporters are in many cases behind those of other nations in trying to make their goods conform to French standards and tastes, and often send them packed in such a way that they do not stand the ocean voyage.

In addition to the American Industrial Commission which came over to study the French situation in 1916, there was the Engi-

neering Commission which came over in 1918, and an Educational Commission which came over in the spring of 1919. The United States Government and the large banking, exporting, and contracting interests have sent over any number of committees and experts to study these problems. The American Chamber of Commerce in France has been indefatigable in trying to solve them. The Franco-American Mission, of which Monsieur Tardieu is the head, has been most active in promoting public and private negotiations between the two countries. The Society called France-Amérique, and other Franco-American groups, have been very successful in creating a better understanding in each country of the needs and problems of the other.

There has been organized in the United States an exchange-press service between America and France, America and Belgium, with Italy, and with England, to publish generally in each of the countries worth-while articles on economic, social, and political situations in the others. There has also been organized in each of the four European countries just mentioned, a commission composed

of leading business men, manufacturers, and bankers, which is going to the United States in September, 1919, as the guest of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, in the interest of creating better understanding between the countries.

Meanwhile American exporters, bankers, contractors, and promoters, have been coming to France in rapidly increasing numbers; various American financial groups stand ready to make large loans in France; the American exporters in their understanding with the bankers are already making much easier credit conditions to the French; American contractors, associating with French contractors, are already getting started on reconstruction contracts. The possibilities of collaboration and of good business between the two countries are increasing daily.

Another problem of great importance to France in a business way is that of the tourists and their hotels, for without any question, for many years to come, the country will be overrun with tourists from every corner of the globe and especially from America. The touring-Club de France, the Automobile Club de



**VITRIMONT, MEURTHE-ET-MOSELLE**  
Rebuilt by the California Committee.



**THE CARPENTER SHOP OF THE AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR  
DEVASTATED FRANCE, AT BLERANCOURT, AISNE**





France, the National Hotel Syndicate, all realize this keenly and have been preparing for it for some time. The Hotel Committee of the Touring Club published a report in 1917, embodying a complete hotel program for France, showing on a map just where hotels were needed and the character and size of each; in all it estimated that France should construct immediately 600,000,000 francs' worth of new hotels. A number of these projects are already being realized, often with the help of foreign capital, but as soon as the government "Crédit Hôtelier" is voted work will be actively undertaken.

In 1917 the French Government was prevailed upon to create a Government Tourist Office to promote this great national industry. The result was the creation of the Office National de Tourisme, under the direction of Monsieur Famechon, and attached to the Ministry of Commerce. On February 17, 1919, there was a congress in Paris of the four hundred Syndicats d'Initiative, or boosting societies, of France. They are coöperating heartily in the movement to prepare for tourists.

Recently it has become apparent that the

new hotels can never be built in time to meet the demands, so these societies are concentrating on an effort to induce the thousands of little hotels and inns to do immediately the things necessary to make them meet the minimum specifications of the Touring Club for an acceptable hotel.

Ever since April, 1919, commercial tours to the devastated regions have been in progress. The two railroad companies in the devastated regions have each organized several which they call "pilgrimages." Automobile touring is limited only by the cost of gasoline and the price of tires. Several thousand people come to Rheims every day to see the ruins and the battle-fields near by. Most of these tourists are only a few hours in the devastated regions at a time and spend little or no money there. This is giving rise to much unpleasant feeling on the part of the natives, who quite justifiably demand that the tourists should contribute to the reestablishment of the communities by a sojourn tax at least. This problem is bound to become increasingly acute as time goes on.

So far we have been discussing only the busi-

ness problems of reconstruction. There is another side that proves far more interesting to many people, and that is the philanthropic side. Ever since the beginning of the war we have been hearing about the adoption of towns; a great deal of sentiment has grown up in Europe and the United States in favor of helping the destroyed villages come back to life.

The first real adoption to come to any practical result was in Vitrimont, in the Meurthe-et-Moselle. There virtually the entire village has been rebuilt by an American committee, and it is the only village that has been completely rebuilt in the whole of the devastated region.

In the summer of 1917, several villages in the Somme and the Oise were tentatively adopted by Americans who expected to rebuild them; but the German advance in the spring of 1918 stopped these plans.

Since the signing of the armistice, one after another, we have heard of the adoption of this town or that. Bordeaux has adopted Albert and has already sent it 150,000 francs; Clermont-en-Argonne has been adopted by Clermont-Ferrand; Roye, by Rambouillet; Pont-à-Mousson, by Metz; Herpy, by Arles; Chauny

et La Bassée, by Chartres; Arras, by Marseilles (already over a million francs have been sent to Arras); Vouziers has been adopted by Rennes; St. Laurent-Blangy, by Versailles; Suippes, by St. Nazaire; Sampigny, by Mulhouse; Laon and St. Quentin, by Lyon; Pettancourt in the Lorraine by the Eleventh Ward of Paris, and a nameless village by Barcelona.

There have been many unofficial rumors about Americans having adopted this or that town, but up to July, 1919, the only applications that have been officially recognized by the French Government were the adoption of Hattonchâtel in the Meuse by Miss Skinner of Holyoke, Mass.; Coucy-le-Château by Mrs. Whitney Warren of New York; Landres and St. Georges near Romagne by "The Delineator"; and Rheims in part by the City of Chicago; also, the American Fund for French Wounded is giving a three-hundred-thousand-dollar hospital to Rheims; and the Roman Catholics of New York city are raising money to rebuild destroyed churches in France.

To gain a concrete idea of what adoption may mean, the letter written on June 17, 1919, by the Mayor of the City of Rheims to Ex-

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Mayor Dunne of Chicago, is most interesting. In this letter the following four specific things are named as the items for which the help of Chicago would be most appreciated:

(1) The creation of garden suburbs, with at least 100 model dwellings for working-men, with plenty of parks and gardens. Such a garden suburb would cost about 2,000,000 francs, exclusive of the public baths which it would be most desirable to have with each suburb. The new city plans call for four such suburbs.

(2) Almost all of the hospitals of Rheims were destroyed. The American Fund for French Wounded is building a splendid hospital for children, but it is most desirable that a large general hospital should be built to take care of the other needs of the town. Such a hospital would cost from 6,000,000 to 10,000,000 francs.

(3) The Public Library, which was installed in a corner of the old town hall, was completely destroyed; but fortunately all the magnificent collections, manuscripts, engravings, etc.—some 40,000 items—were saved,

and would form the nucleus of a new library built on the old site. It would cost about 2,000,000 francs to build the library and about 2,000,000 francs more to replace its destroyed books.

(4) There is great need of a Scientific Institute in the School of Medicine, in which there would be laboratories for the study of bacteriology, chemistry, botany, physiology, and viticulture.

At Hattonchâtel, Miss Skinner started her "adoption" by providing for the repair of the water-supply system installed by the Germans during their occupation. She is assuming the extra cost of removing the manure piles from before the houses and installing them hygienically in the rear instead.

The question arises so often about the meaning of the word "adoption," that I asked Monsieur Maucière, the Commissioner-General in the Ministry of Liberated Regions, if he would give me an official definition of it. On June 2, 1919, he wrote me that the French Government and the French people were most appreciative of the good wishes of their American

friends and most grateful for what Americans were doing for the unfortunate people in the devastated regions. He called my attention to the fact that the war-damage law provided for the payment in full of all losses sustained, which meant that if a benefactor reconstructed private buildings at his own expense, either the proprietor of the house would be paid twice over, or the benefactor would be making his gift to the French Government. For that reason he felt that gifts should be used solely for improvements which would not be paid for by the State. Furthermore, he felt that these improvements ought to be to the advantage of a group of people or the town as a whole, rather than for the benefit of any one individual. For example, he thought that giving a public shower-bath would be much more useful than giving separate baths to a number of individuals; giving a public water-supply or a sewer system much more desirable than providing individual wells or improving individual privies or water-closets. He felt that the time for giving or even selling relief supplies had nearly passed, because if continued much longer it would prevent normal business from



reestablishing itself, and would lead only to pauperization. He felt that gifts could be made to better advantage for the collective improvement of physical and moral life. He said:

"All the pecuniary and material resources and all of the collaboration of your admirably trained public-health nurses and welfare workers that you can put at the disposition of the groups that are trying to found community centers in the devastated regions will be most keenly appreciated by us." He went on to say: "In this public-health and community-center work we are at the very beginning, while you have already had a long experience. We have plenty of good-will, but to put it into effective use we shall for some time need your instruction and guidance."

Monsieur Maucière was convinced that the creation of a health and community center, endowed for a period until it could get thoroughly on its feet, was the greatest contribution that Americans could make.

I have talked with a number of the French leaders about this, and they seem to be pretty generally of the opinion that something of this

sort that will improve the physical and moral well-being of the returning refugees is the thing that is most worth while. With the passage of the eight-hour law in France most people have gained an hour or two of leisure. The problem is how to use this extra time to best advantage. There has been great physical and moral strain during the war and people need a chance to relax and recuperate. The returning soldier, as Monsieur Lebrun, Minister of Liberated Regions, so wisely remarked, deserves the best his country can give him—a real home in healthy, comfortable, charming surroundings, a better place than the saloon for his physical and mental recreation, and a happy environment for his family.

The Young Women's Christian Association has been doing some wonderful work of this sort for the young women in the factory towns of France. The 1,500 *foyers des soldats*, which the Young Men's Christian Association had so much to do with organizing and running, have proved to be of inestimable value. Now thirty *foyers des soldats* in the devastated regions are being changed into *foyers civils* for the returning refugees and the workmen. The

Ligue Civique is creating *foyers civiques*; another group is creating *maisons de tous*; another group has already started several rural community centers, called *foyers de campagnes*.

The idea of these is the same in each case. One part of the group is to be used as a health center, with a dispensary, shower-baths, and disinfection plant; a second part is to consist of one or more meeting-rooms, which can be used by reconstruction coöperative societies, agricultural syndicates, a children's club, a mothers' club, or any other community group; and the third part would be used just like our American community centers, as a general meeting-place, with a library, newspapers, and magazines, games, motion-picture shows, dances, theatricals, often with a temperance canteen attached. Already a number of these are being organized by the various groups. The idea is taking hold and is bound to spread rapidly.

Now that peace is signed the heads of the French Government are devoting themselves actively to the liberated regions. Monsieur Clemenceau, returning from a trip in the devastated towns, has promised that the Govern-

ment will speed up its machinery in those regions; in particular he insists that 200,000 refugees that are now living in most temporary shelters must be and are going to be decently housed before next winter. Every effort is now being directed toward this end.

France has suffered four and a half years of cruel war on her own territory; a large part of her best source of revenue has been cut off; her coal and iron and textiles have been taken from her; millions of British and American troops have been quartered all over her land, and in addition several million refugees have been billeted throughout the country; a million and a half of her best men have been killed, and another million maimed; through four and a half years she has kept up the pace and carried through. If ever a nation has earned the right to a helping hand, it is France. Yet in her pride and her self-respect she is meeting her new problems of reconstruction with an energy and a vision that the most callous must admire. It is a privilege to be allowed to collaborate with such a people.

**THE END**



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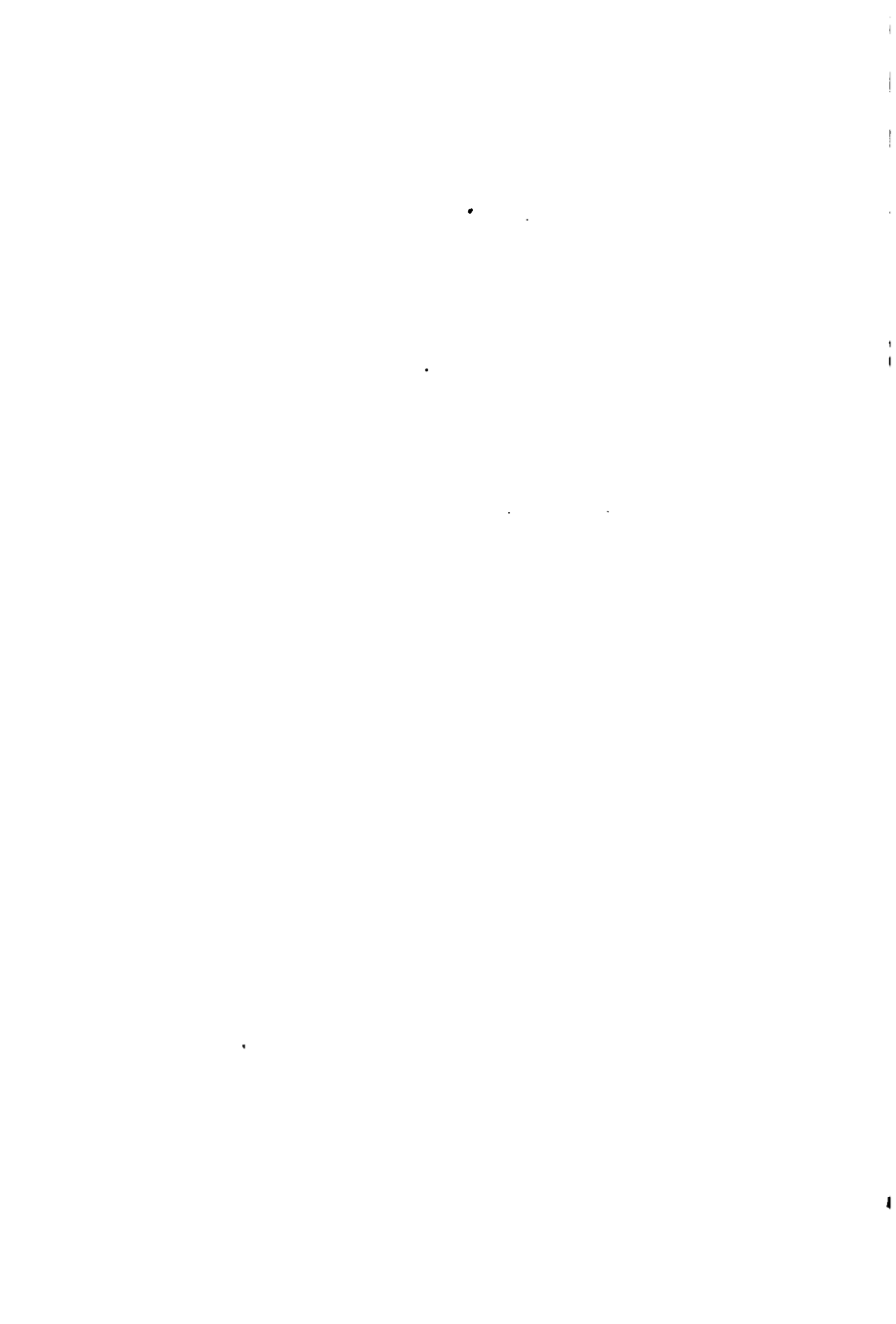
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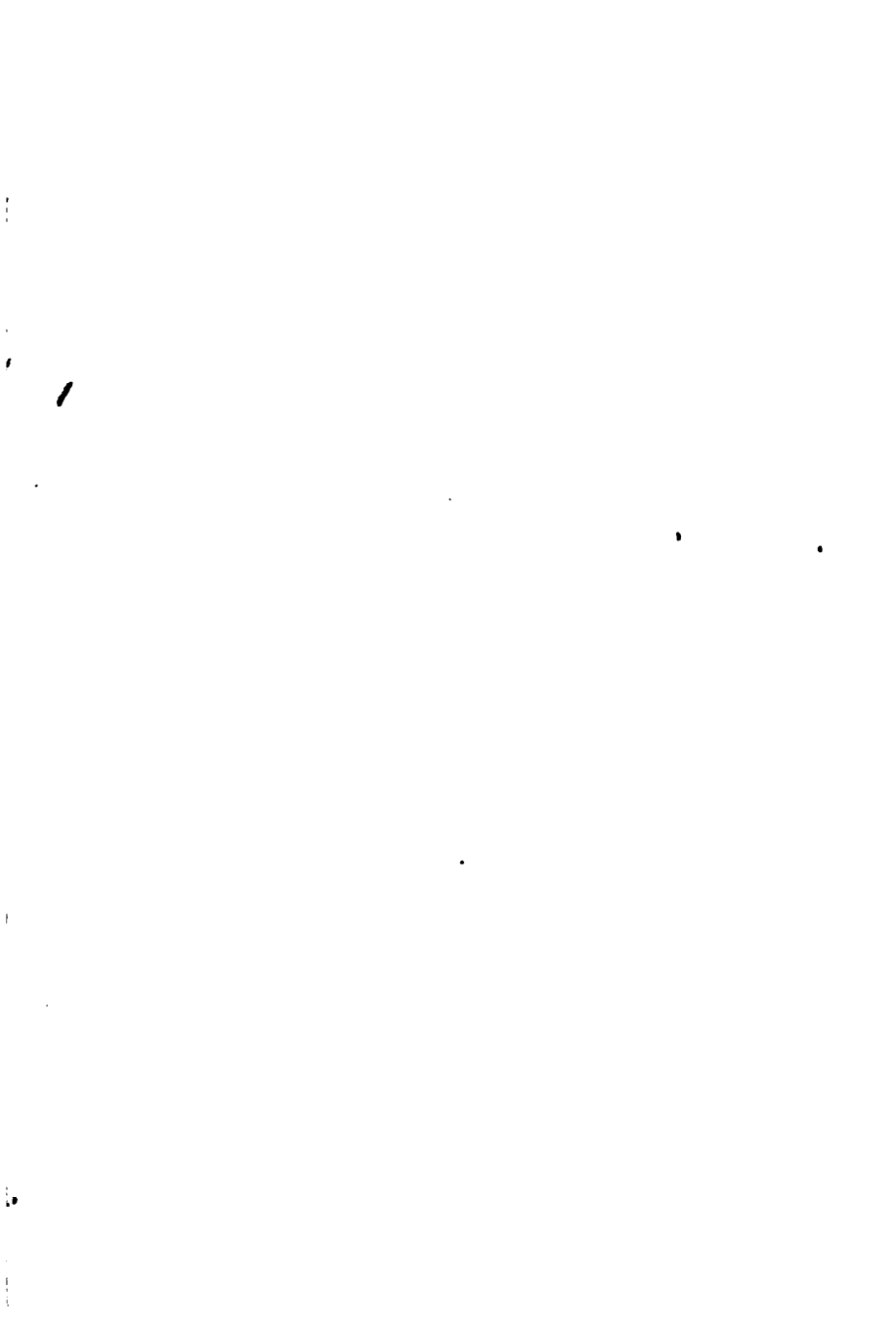
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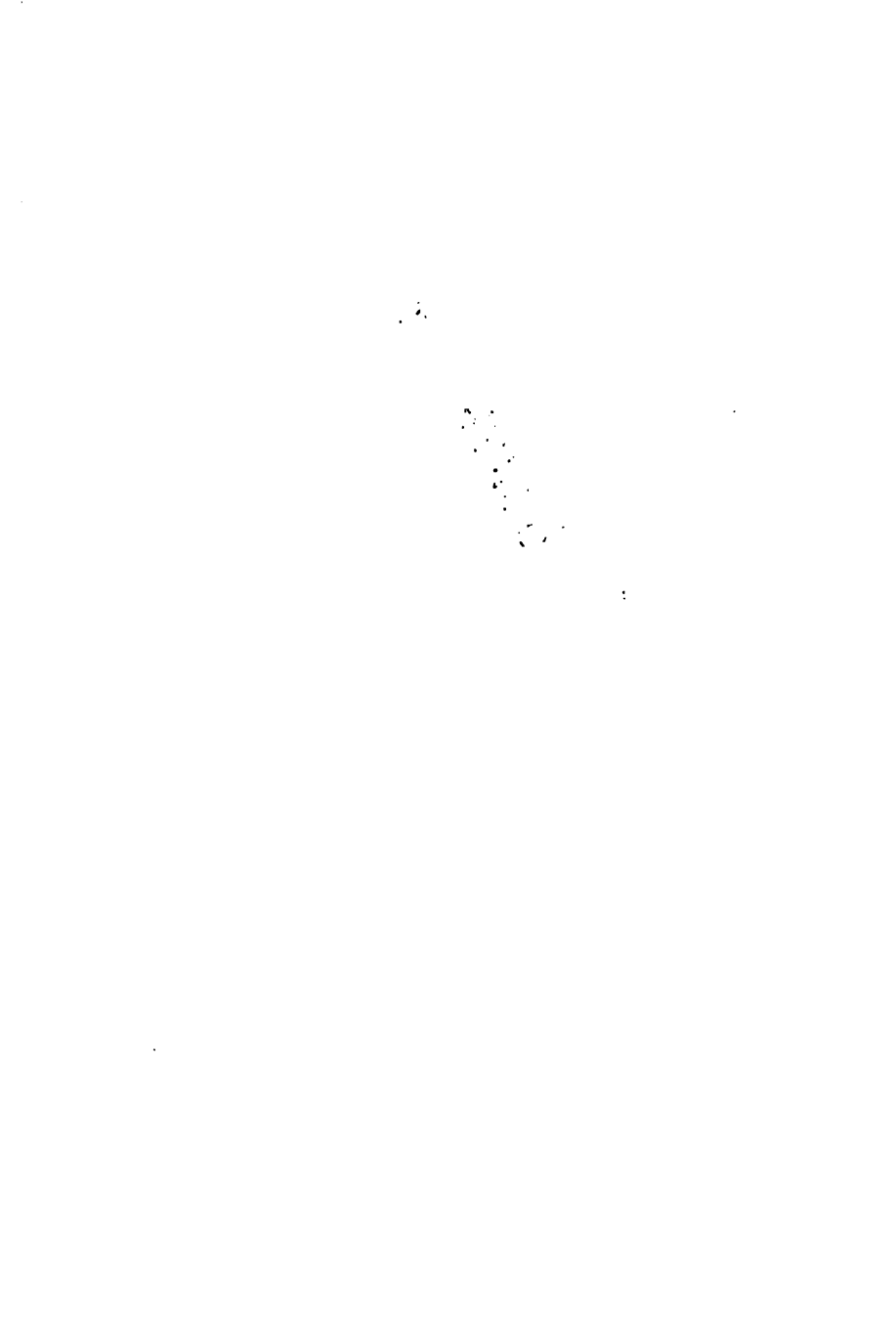
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